Wisconsin Annual Conference

Results from the Endorsement of General Conference Petitions
Ballot at the 2015 Annual Conference on Sunday, June 14, 2015

Total number of Ballots: **610**

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Petition #01: MARRIAGE EQUALITY (¶161B)

Submitted By: John Lawson, local church member; Gail Burgess, local church member; Steve Polster, assistant to the bishop; Steve Zekoff, conference benefits officer

Author’s Rationale: United Methodist related organizations must respond to calls for increasing quality, transparency, and accountability while remaining faithful to the missional aspects of their work. The United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries is the body established by the Discipline to assist organizations and conferences in these challenges.

The Petition:

WHEREAS, Christ demonstrated a concern for healing of body, mind, and soul throughout his ministry; and

WHEREAS, John Wesley repeatedly demonstrated his concern for health and social ministry; and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church has a nearly 250-year history of service in hospitals and ministries to older adults, children, youth, and families. Today there are over 400 such United Methodist-related health and welfare organizations; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing recognition in scientific and medical literature of the role of faith in wellness and healing; and

WHEREAS, numerous studies have documented that not-for-profit health care organizations provide higher-quality care; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing recognition in management literature of the application of Christian principles in management and leadership; and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries has a long 75 year tradition of promoting quality service, Christian leadership, and connection with annual conferences and local churches.

Therefore The United Methodist Church calls upon:

A. Healthcare providers and government agencies to:
   1) devote needed resources to the promotion of quality healthcare;
   2) engage in programs of continuous quality improvement; and
   3) recognize the role of faith in health and wellness.

B. United Methodist related health and welfare institutions to:
   1) maintain membership and participation in The United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries ¶632.4.b (31)* 633.4.b) (30), ¶ 2517.5*;
   2) participate in EAGLE accreditation ¶632.4.b (29)* 633.4.b) (28), ¶ 2517.5*;
   3) suggest that Annual Conferences address participation in these programs when updating covenant relationship statements. ¶632.4.b (27)* 633.4.b) (28), ¶ 2517.5*; and
   4) recruit and select paid and volunteer leadership which recognizes and values the church connection and the role of faith in health and wholeness.

C. Annual conference and local churches to:
   1) encourage or require membership in the United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries when updating covenant relationship statements ¶632.4.b (27)* 633.4.b) (30), ¶ 2517.5*;
   2) Encourage or require participation in EAGLE accreditation when updating covenant relationship statements ¶632.4.b (29)* 633.4.b) (28), ¶ 2517.5*; and
   3) encourage awareness and utilization of United Methodist-related Health and Welfare ministries. ¶632.4.b (31)* 633.4.b) (30)*

* All citations are from the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2004-2012.
Petition Group B: Global Structure (9)

Petition #02: Global Connectional Conference (¶¶8, 13–16)

Submitted By: Steve Zekoff, conference benefits officer; Gail Burgess, lay member, Bristol UMC; Lisa King, conference treasurer; Tom Pop, lay member, Lake Mills UMC

Author’s Rationale: Increased UMC globalization calls for an updated connectional organization. These petitions are a new three-part decision making model.

1. United Methodist Global Connection, responsible for global matters.
2. United Methodist Connections in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, focusing on the region’s missional perspective.
3. Current annual conferences retained.

The Petition:
Be it resolved that ¶¶8, 13–16 be amended as follows:

¶ 8. Article I.—There shall be a General Conference Global Connectional Conference for the entire Church with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth…

Section II. General Conference Global Connectional Conference

¶ 13. Article I.—1. The General Conference Global Connectional Conference shall be composed of not less than 600 nor more than 1,000 delegates, one-half of whom shall be clergy and one half lay members, to be elected by the annual conferences. The missionary conferences shall be considered as annual conferences for the purpose of this article.

2. Delegates shall be elected in a fair and open process by the annual conferences. The same formula shall be used to determine the number of delegates of all annual conferences and missionary conferences, provided that no annual conference or missionary conference shall have fewer than two delegates.

3. Delegates may be elected by other autonomous Methodist churches if and when the General Conference Global Connectional Conference shall approve concordats with such other autonomous Methodist churches for the mutual election and seating of delegates in each other’s legislative conferences.

4. In the case of The Methodist Church in Great Britain, mother church of Methodism, provision shall be made for The United Methodist Church to send two delegates annually to the British Methodist Conference, and The Methodist Church in Great Britain to send four delegates quadrennially to The United Methodist General Conference Global Connectional Conference, the delegates of both conferences having vote and being evenly divided between clergy and laity.

¶ 14. Article II.—1. The General Conference Global Connectional Conference shall meet in the month of April or May once in four years at such time and in such place as shall be determined by the General Conference Global Connectional Conference or by its duly authorized committees.

A special session of the General Conference Global Connectional Conference, possessing the authority and exercising all the powers of the General Conference Global Connectional Conference, may be called by the Council of Bishops, or in such other manner as the General Conference Global Connectional Conference may from time to time prescribe, to meet at such time and in such place as may be stated in the call. Such special session of the General Conference Global Connectional Conference shall be composed of the delegates to the preceding General Conference Global Connectional Conference or their lawful successors, except that when a particular annual conference or missionary conference shall prefer to have a new election it may do so. The purpose of such special session shall be stated in the call, and only such business shall be transacted as is in harmony with the purpose stated in such call unless the General Conference Global Connectional Conference by a two-thirds vote shall determine that other business may be transacted.

¶ 15. Article III.—The General Conference Global Connectional Conference shall fix the ratio of representation in the General Global, connectional, jurisdictional, and central and regional conferences from the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and the provisional annual conferences, computed...
on a two-factor basis: (1) the number of clergy members of the annual conference and the missionary conference, and (2) the number of professing members in the annual conference and the missionary conference, provided that each annual conference, missionary conference, or provisional annual conference shall be entitled to at least one clergy and one lay delegate in the General Conference Global Connectional Conference and also in the connectional and jurisdictional or central regional conferences.

¶ 16. Article IV.—The General Conference Global Connectional Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional, except for those powers constitutionally delegated to the connectional conferences, and in the exercise of this power shall have authority as follows:

1. To define and fix the conditions, privileges, and duties of Church membership, which shall in every case be without reference to race, gender, or status.

2. To define and fix the powers and duties of elders, deacons, supply preachers, pastors, local preachers, exhorters, deaconesses, and home missioners, which shall in every case be without reference to race, gender, or status.

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

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

5. To define and fix the powers, duties, and privileges of the episcopacy, to adopt a plan for the support of the bishops, to provide a uniform rule for their retirement, and to provide for the discontinuance of a bishop because of inefficiency or unacceptability.

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

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

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

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

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

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

12. To change the number and the boundaries of jurisdictional conferences.

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

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

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

16. To enact such other legislation as may be necessary, subject to the limitations and restrictions of the Constitution of the Church.
Petition #03: Connectional Conferences (new paragraph)

Submitted By: Steve Zekoff, conference benefits officer; Gail Burgess, lay member, Bristol UMC; Lisa King, conference treasurer; Tom Pop, lay member, Lake Mills UMC

Author's Rationale: Increased UMC globalization calls for an updated connectional organization. These petitions are a new three-part decision making model.

1. United Methodist Global Connection, responsible for global matters.
2. United Methodist Connections in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, focusing on the region’s missional perspective.
3. Current annual conferences retained.

The Petition:

Be it resolved that a new paragraph be inserted between ¶8 and ¶9, and subsequent paragraphs renumbered, as follows:

¶ 9. Article II.—There shall be connectional conferences in all areas of the globe in which The United Methodist Church operates, with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth.

Insert new Section IV, subsequent to the Restrictive Rules and prior to what is currently ¶23, as follows:

Section IV. Connectional Conferences

¶ 23. Article I.—The connectional conferences shall be composed of the delegates from the annual conferences within its boundaries who have been elected to the Global Connectional Conference. No connectional conference shall have fewer than 100 delegates, one half of whom shall be lay and one half clergy. The same formula shall be used to determine the number of delegates of all annual conferences and missionary conferences. In cases where a connectional conference would otherwise have fewer than 100 delegates, the additional delegates shall be elected in accordance with the above process; these delegates may be the same as those elected to regional conferences. The missionary conferences shall be considered as annual conferences for the purpose of this article.

¶ 24. Article II.—All connectional conferences shall have the same status and the same privileges of action within the limits fixed by the Constitution.

¶ 25. Article III.—Each connectional conference shall meet within a year prior to or in conjunction with the Global Connectional Conference, at such time and in such place as shall be determined by the connectional College of Bishops or its delegated committee.

A special session of a connectional conference, possessing the authority and exercising all the powers of the connectional conference, may be called by the connectional conference’s college of bishops, or in such other manner as the connectional conference may from time to time prescribe, to meet at such time and in such place as may be stated in the call. Such special session of the connectional conference shall be composed of the delegates to the preceding connectional conference or their lawful successors, except that when a particular annual conference or missionary conference shall prefer to have a new election it may do so. The purpose of such special session shall be stated in the call, and only such business shall be transacted as is in harmony with the purpose stated in such call unless the connectional conference by a two-thirds vote shall determine that other business may be transacted.

¶ 26. Article IV.—The connectional conferences shall have the following powers and duties and such others as may be conferred by the Global Connectional Conferences:

1. To provide for the organization, promotion, and administration of the work of the Church within their boundaries, including to promote the evangelistic, educational, missionary, social-concern, and benevolent interests of the Church, subject to the powers and authority of the Global Connectional Conference. Connectional Conferences are authorized to create a connectional Book of Discipline, subject to the powers that have been vested in the Global Connectional Conference as contained within the global Book of Discipline.
2. To set the tenure and method of assignment of the episcopacy within the connection, to provide a uniform rule for their retirement, to provide for the discontinuance of a bishop, and to fix a uniform basis upon which bishops shall be elected by the regional conferences.

3. To provide for a process of ordination and to set standards for conference membership and conference relationship, which shall in every case be without reference to race, gender or status.

4. To regulate all matters relating to the form and mode of worship, subject to the limitations of the first and second Restrictive Rules.

5. To initiate and to direct all connectional enterprises of the Church within the connection and to provide boards for their promotion and administration, subject to the authority and powers of the Global Connectional Conference.

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

7. To change the number and the boundaries of regional conferences upon the consent of a majority of the annual conferences within the regional conferences involved.

8. To establish such commissions for the work of the Church within the connection as may be deemed advisable.

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

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

11. To provide a judicial system and method of judicial procedure, subject to the powers of the Global Connectional Conference and the authority of the Judicial Council, to determine legal questions on the rules, regulations, and other matters of connectional disciplinary law.

12. To enact such other legislation as may be necessary, subject to the limitations and restrictions of the Constitution of the Church and powers and authority of the Global Connectional Conference.

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**Petition #04: Regional Conference (¶¶9–10, 23–31)**

Submitted By: Steve Zekoff, conference benefits officer; Gail Burgess, lay member, Bristol UMC; Lisa King, conference treasurer; Tom Pop, lay member, Lake Mills UMC

**Author’s Rationale:** Increased UMC globalization calls for an updated connectional organization. These petitions are a new three-part decision making model.

1. United Methodist Global Connection, responsible for global matters.
2. United Methodist Connections in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, focusing on the region’s missional perspective.
3. Current annual conferences retained.

**The Petition:**

Be it resolved that ¶¶ 9–10, 23–31 be amended as follows:

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

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

¶ 9. Article II. — A Connectional conference shall have the option of establishing regional conferences for the organization of the church in the connection, and, if necessary, provisional regional conferences, all with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth, provided that there shall be no regional conference based on any ground other than geographical division. In connectional conferences without regional conferences, the connectional conference will assume the responsibilities assigned to a...
regional conference. Initially, the number and boundaries of the regional conferences shall match the previous boundaries of the central conferences and jurisdictions. Subsequently, the connectional conferences shall have the authority to change the number and boundaries of regional conferences.

Delete ¶¶ 23–27 on Jurisdictional Conferences and ¶¶ 28–31 on Central Conferences and replace with new paragraphs as follows:

Section IV. Regional Conferences

¶ 23 Article I.—The regional conferences shall be composed of as many representatives from the annual conferences and missionary conferences as shall be determined by a uniform basis established by the Global Connectional Conference, provided that no regional conference shall have fewer than 100 delegates. The delegates shall be clergy and lay in equal numbers.

¶ 24. Article II.—The regional conferences shall meet within the year succeeding the meeting of the Global Connectional Conference at such times and places as shall have been determined by the preceding respective regional conferences or by commissions appointed by them or by their respective College of Bishops.

¶ 25. Article III.—All regional conferences shall have the same status and same privileges of action within the limits fixed by the Constitution.

¶ 26. Article IV—The regional conferences shall have the following powers and duties and such others as may be conferred by the Global Connectional Conference:

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

2. To elect bishops for the respective regional conferences in number as may be determined from time to time, upon a basis fixed by the Global Connectional Conference, and to cooperate in carrying out such plans for their support as may be determined by the Global Connectional Conference.

3. To establish and constitute regional and conference boards as auxiliary to the global and connectional boards of the Church as the need may appear and to choose their representatives on the global and connectional boards in such manner as the Global Connectional Conference may determine.

4. To determine the boundaries of their annual conferences, provided that there shall be no annual conference with a membership of fewer than 50 clergy in full connection, except by the consent of the Global Connectional Conference.

5. To make rules and regulations for the administration of the work of the Church within the region, subject to such powers as have been or shall be vested in the Global Connectional Conference and connectional conferences.

6. To appoint a committee on appeals to hear and determine the appeal of a clergy person of that region from the decision of a trial court.

7. To appoint a committee on the episcopacy.

8. To establish and to appoint such other committees as may be necessary.

Petition #05: Miscellaneous Provisions about Annual Conferences Related to Global Church Structure (¶33–36)

Submitted By: Steve Zekoff, conference benefits officer; Gail Burgess, lay member, Bristol UMC; Lisa King, conference treasurer; Tom Pop, lay member, Lake Mills UMC

Author’s Rationale: Increased UMC globalization calls for an updated connectional organization. These petitions are a new three-part decision making model.

1. United Methodist Global Connection, responsible for global matters.

2. United Methodist Connections in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, focusing on the region’s missional perspective.

3. Current annual conferences retained.

The Petition:

Be it resolved that ¶¶33–36 be amended as follows:
¶ 33. Article II.—The annual conference is the basic body in the Church and as such shall have reserved to it the right to vote on all constitutional amendments, on the election of clergy and lay delegates to the General and the jurisdictional or central conferences. Global, connectional and regional conferences, on all matters relating to the character and conference relations of its clergy members, and…

¶ 34. Article III.—The annual conference shall elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference Global Connectional Conference and to its jurisdictional or central conference connectional conference and regional conference in the manner provided in this section, Articles IV and V. The persons first elected up to the number determined by the ratio for representation in the General Conference Global Connectional Conference and connectional conference shall be representatives in that body those bodies. Additional delegates shall be elected to complete the number determined by ratio for representation in the jurisdictional or central conference regional conference, who, together with those first elected as above, shall be delegates in the jurisdictional or central conference regional conference. The additional delegates to the jurisdictional or central conference regional conference shall in the order of their election be the reserve delegates to the General Conference Global Connectional Conference and connectional conference. The annual conference shall also elect reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional or central conference regional conference as it may deem desirable. These reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional or central conferences regional conferences may act as reserve to the General Conference Global Connectional Conference and connectional conference when it is evident that not enough reserve delegates are in attendance at the General Conference Global Connectional Conference or connectional conference.

¶ 35. Article V—The clergy delegates to the General Conference Global Connectional Conference and to the jurisdictional or central conference connectional conference and regional conference shall be elected from…

¶ 36. Article V.—The lay delegates to General and jurisdictional or central conferences Global Connectional, connectional and regional conferences shall be elected by… …and are members thereof within the annual conference electing them at the time of holding the General and jurisdictional or central conferences Global Connectional, connectional and regional conferences.

Petition #06 Global Structure Boundaries (¶¶37–40)

Submitted By: Steve Zekoff, conference benefits officer; Gail Burgess, lay member, Bristol UMC; Lisa King, conference treasurer; Tom Pop, lay member, Lake Mills UMC

Author’s Rationale: Increased UMC globalization calls for an updated connectional organization. These petitions are a new three-part decision making model.

1. United Methodist Global Connection, responsible for global matters.
2. United Methodist Connections in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, focusing on the region’s missional perspective.
3. Current annual conferences retained.

The Petition:

Be it resolved that ¶ 37 be amended as follows:

Section VII. Boundaries

¶ 37. Article I.—The United Methodist Church shall organize its work into connectional conferences, There shall be one connectional conference each for Africa, Asia, Europe and North America.

Delete ¶ 37 (the North American Connectional Conference will have authority to maintain these boundaries as regional conferences, but they won’t be listed in the Constitution).

Insert new paragraph before ¶ 38 as follows:

¶ 38. Article II.—The connectional conferences shall determine the number and boundaries of their regions, upon the consent of a majority of the annual conferences within the regional conferences. The initial number and boundaries of the regions shall coincide with the previously existing jurisdictional and central conferences.
Delete ¶¶ 38 and 39. Renumber ¶ 40 and amend as follows:

¶ 40. Article IV. ¶ 39. Article III. — Changes in the number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences and episcopal areas may be effected by the jurisdictional conferences in the United States of America and by the central conferences outside the United States of America according to the provisions under the respective powers and pursuant to the respective structures of the jurisdictional and the central conferences.

Petition #07  The Episcopacy within a New Global Structure (¶¶46–54)

Submitted By: Steve Zekoff, conference benefits officer; Gail Burgess, lay member, Bristol UMC; Lisa King, conference treasurer; Tom Pop, lay member, Lake Mills UMC

Author’s Rationale: Increased UMC globalization calls for an updated connectional organization. These petitions are a new three-part decision making model.

1. United Methodist Global Connection, responsible for global matters.
2. United Methodist Connections in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, focusing on the region’s missional perspective.
3. Current annual conferences retained.

The Petition:
Be it resolved that ¶¶46–54 be amended as follows:

¶ 46. Article II. — The bishops shall be elected by the respective jurisdictional and central conferences and consecrated in the historic manner at such time and place as may be fixed by the General Conference.

¶ 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.

¶ 48. Article IV. — The bishops of each connectional conference shall constitute a connectional College of Bishops. Such connectional College of Bishops may meet according to its needs in order to plan for the general oversight and promotion of the temporal and spiritual interests of the connection.

¶ 48. Article III  ¶ 49. Article V. — The bishops of each jurisdictional and central conference shall constitute a regional College of Bishops, and such College of Bishops shall arrange the plan of episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within their respective territories.

¶ 49. Article V  ¶ 50. Article VI. — The bishops shall have residential presidential supervision in the jurisdictional or central conferences 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. 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 regional conference.

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

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

¶ 50 Article VI ¶ 51 Article VII. — 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, 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. Each bishop elected by a central conference of The Methodist Church shall have such tenure as the central conference electing him shall have determined. Each bishop shall have such tenure as has been determined by the connectional conference within which said bishop has been elected.

The jurisdictional regional 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 regional 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 regional conference.

¶ 51 Article VII ¶ 52 Article VIII. — A bishop presiding over an annual, central, or jurisdictional connectional or regional conference shall decide all questions of law coming before the bishop in the regular business of a session, provided that such questions be presented in writing and that the decisions be recorded in the journal of the conference...

¶ 52 Article VIII ¶ 53 Article IX. — The bishops of the several jurisdictional and central connectional and regional conferences shall preside in the session of their respective conferences.

¶ 53 Article IX ¶ 54 Article X. — In each annual conference there shall be one or more district superintendents who shall assist the bishop in the administration of the annual conference and shall have such responsibilities and term of office as the General Conference respective connectional conferences shall prescribe.

¶ 54 Article X ¶ 55 Article XI. — The bishops shall appoint, after consultation with the district superintendents, ministers to the charges; and they shall have such responsibilities and authorities as the General Conference Global Connectional Conference and connectional conferences shall prescribe.

Petition #08 The Judiciary within a New Global Structure (¶¶55–58)

Submitted By: Steve Zekoff, conference benefits officer; Gail Burgess, lay member, Bristol UMC; Lisa King, conference treasurer; Tom Pop, lay member, Lake Mills UMC

Author’s Rationale: Increased UMC globalization calls for an updated connectional organization. These petitions are a new three-part decision making model.

1. United Methodist Global Connection, responsible for global matters.
2. United Methodist Connections in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, focusing on the region’s missional perspective.
3. Current annual conferences retained.
The Petition:
Be it resolved that ¶¶55–58 be amended as follows:

¶ 55. Article I.—There shall be a Judicial Council. The General Conference Global Connectional Conference shall determine the number and qualifications of its members, their terms of office, and the method of election and the filling of vacancies.

¶ 56. Article II.—The Judicial Council shall have authority:
1. To determine the constitutionality of any act of the General Conference Global Connectional Conference upon an appeal of a majority of the Council of Bishops or one-fifth of the members of the General Conference Global Connectional Conference and to determine the constitutionality or legality under the global Book of Discipline of any act of a jurisdictional or central conference connectional or regional conference upon an appeal of a majority of the bishops of that jurisdictional or central conference connectional or regional conference or upon the appeal of one-fifth of the members of that jurisdictional or central conference connectional or regional conference.
2. To hear and determine any appeal from a bishop’s decision on a question of global law made in the annual conference when said appeal has been made by one-fifth of that conference present and voting.
3. To pass upon decisions of law made by bishops in annual conferences.
4. To hear and determine the legality of any action taken therein by any General Conference Global Connectional Conference board or jurisdictional or central conference board or body, upon appeal by one-third of the members thereof, or upon request of the Council of Bishops or a majority of the bishops of a jurisdictional or a central conference connectional or regional conference.
5. To have such other duties and powers as may be conferred upon it by the General Conference Global Connectional Conference.
6. To provide its own methods of organization and procedure.

¶ 57. Article III.—There shall be connectional judicial committees in each connectional conference. Connectional Judicial Committees shall have five members who shall be elected by the respective connectional conferences. The respective connectional conferences shall determine the qualifications of their respective connectional judicial committee’s members, their terms of office, and the method of election by the connectional conference and the filling of vacancies.

The Connectional Judicial Committees shall have authority to review matters of connectional church law as follows:
1. To determine the legality of any act of their respective connectional conferences upon an appeal of a majority of the respective connectional College of Bishops or one-fifth of the members of the Connectional Conference in accordance with their connectional disciplinary law, and to determine the legality of any act of one of their regional conferences upon an appeal of a majority of the bishops of that regional conference or upon the appeal of one-fifth of the members of that regional conference in accordance with their connectional disciplinary law.
2. To hear and determine any appeal from a bishop’s decision on a question of connectional disciplinary law made in the annual conference when said appeal has been made by one-fifth of that conference present and voting.
3. To pass upon decisions of connectional disciplinary law made by bishops in annual conferences.
4. To hear and determine the legality under connectional law of any action taken therein by any connectional conference board or regional board or body, upon appeal by one-third of the members thereof, or upon request of the connectional college of bishops or a majority of the bishops of a regional college of bishops.
5. To have such other duties and powers as may be conferred upon it by its respective connectional conference.
6. To provide its own methods of organization and procedure.
§ 58 Article IV.—Connectional Judicial Committees shall not have authority to review matters of constitutional and/or global church law. Questions that include such points, including when they include points of connectional and constitutional and/or global church law, shall be referred to the Judicial Council.

§ 57 Article III § 59 Article V.—All decisions of the Judicial Council shall be final. When the Judicial Council shall declare unconstitutional any act of the General Conference Global Connectional Conference then in session, that decision shall be reported back to that General Conference Global Connectional Conference immediately.

§ 58 Article IV § 60 Article VI.—The General Conference Global Connectional 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. This right shall also be respected by the connectional conferences.

Petition #09 General Conference Renamed Global Connectional Conference within the Constitution (Multiple ¶)

Submitted By: Steve Zekoff, conference benefits officer; Gail Burgess, lay member, Bristol UMC; Lisa King, conference treasurer; Tom Pop, lay member, Lake Mills UMC

Author’s Rationale: Increased UMC globalization calls for an updated connectional organization. These petitions are a new three-part decision making model.
1. United Methodist Global Connection, responsible for global matters.
2. United Methodist Connections in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, focusing on the region’s missional perspective.
3. Current annual conferences retained.

The Petition:
Be it resolved that the term “General Conference” be changed to “Global Connectional Conference” wherever it appears in the Constitution.

Petition #10 Jurisdictional Conference and Central Conference Renamed Regional Conference within the Constitution (Multiple ¶)

Submitted By: Steve Zekoff, conference benefits officer; Gail Burgess, lay member, Bristol UMC; Lisa King, conference treasurer; Tom Pop, lay member, Lake Mills UMC

Author’s Rationale: Increased UMC globalization calls for an updated connectional organization. These petitions are a new three-part decision making model.
1. United Methodist Global Connection, responsible for global matters.
2. United Methodist Connections in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, focusing on the region’s missional perspective.
3. Current annual conferences retained.

The Petition:
Be it resolved that the terms “jurisdictional conference” and “central conference” be changed to “regional conference,” and “jurisdiction” to “region” wherever they appear in the Constitution:

Revise: Jurisdictional Conference Regional Conference
Revise: Central Conference Regional Conference
Revise: jurisdiction region
Petition Group C: New Missional Book of Discipline [1]

Petition #11   New Resolution for a Missional or Mission-Focused Book of Discipline

Submitted By: Samuel J. Royappa, district superintendent for the Capital-Coulee Districts

Author’s Rationale: The current Book of Discipline is not helpful for Church health, growth, and vitality, and not relevant or contextual in its language and approach to doing church in the postmodern missional context. A Missional Book of Discipline would lift up the value of missional focus and maximize creative ministry potential.

The Petition:

WHEREAS the mission of The United Methodist Church, “Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World,” continues to be the past, present, and future missional focus at every level, especially for all local churches;

WHEREAS the missional focus stems from an overarching scriptural thread, based on the Great Commandment of Jesus Christ to Love God and Love People, and the Great Commission of Jesus Christ to reach out to all people;

WHEREAS there is an urgency for the Church's dogmas, laws, by-laws, and legislation to reflect only the missional focus of The United Methodist Church;

WHEREAS there is an immediate need for the Church's dogmas, laws, by-laws, and legislation to strategically lead all local churches to become effective agents of Christian ministry or service in the communities;

WHEREAS there is a challenging need for the Church's dogmas, laws, by-laws, and legislations to fruitfully leverage both the General Church and the Local Churches to engage in creative, holistic, and practical ministries for the needs of the postmodern world;

WHEREAS there is a compelling need for the Church's dogmas, laws, by-laws, and legislation to purposefully help the Church, at all levels, in the areas of, but not limited to, Wesleyan spiritual formation, church health, church vitality, church growth, churches connecting with community, serving the needy in the communities, visionary and strategic lay and clergy leadership, healthy accountability, proactive leadership development, and holistic stewardship practices;

WHEREAS the Book of Discipline is amended once in every four years by the General Conference (since its original publication in 1784 by The Methodist Episcopal Church) through legislative process but yet has not proportionately impacted the missional focus of the Church;

WHEREAS there is enormous energy dispensed, millions of dollars spent, tireless and timeless efforts undertaken, for amending The Book of Discipline, every four years, but without objective assessment or accountability as to whether these amendments have qualitatively and quantitatively affected the Church denominationally, globally, and locally, within the underlying frameworks of mission, vision, values, and structure or system, (since 1968);

Therefore, be it resolved that

The 2016 General Conference of The United Methodist Church appoint an appropriate team or task force for the sole purpose of drafting a new Missional or Mission-Focused Book of Discipline;

Be it further resolved that

The team or task force membership include, but not be limited to, active bishops, ordained elders, ordained deacons, licensed local pastors, and lay representatives from United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women, United Methodist Foundations, youth, young adults, racial/ethnic persons from caucuses, ecumenical partners, missiologists, mission strategists (outside of UM membership) and others, as determined by the General Church leadership;

Be it further resolved that
The task force or team, upon its organization, would determine their work timetable, including an objective evaluation of the current Book of Discipline and its missional impact and annually report to the Council of Bishops and the Connectional Table their progress and needs, along with a communication plan to the broader United Methodist community and a detailed report to the General Conference 2020, preferably a draft of an outline of a new Missional Book of Discipline and a drafted action-plan for the following quadrennium.

Petition Group D: For the Unity of the Church (1)

Petition #12: New Resolution for the Unity of The United Methodist Church

Submitted By: Samuel J. Royappa, district superintendent for the Capital-Coulee Districts

Author’s Rationale: Scripture, Tradition, Experience and Reason call every United Methodist to be active parts of the Living Body, united to the same head, governed by the same laws, and pervaded by the same Spirit. The unity of Christendom is not a luxury but a spiritual necessity.

The Petition:

WHEREAS The United Methodist Church stands on the theological sources and criteria that include Scripture, Tradition, Experience, and Reason;

WHEREAS the Scripture calls directly for the unity of core disciples, for the unity of the church with all people, and for the unity of all of Christendom, as expounded in the High Priestly prayer of Jesus (John 17), King David’s invitation (Psalm 133), and Pauline comparisons of the Church with the physical human body (1 Corinthians 12 and 13);

WHEREAS The United Methodist Church is both traditionally and historically known for strengthening local church ministries through membership and discipleship, which is the primary call of all Methodists;

WHEREAS The United Methodist Church experiences the open Communion or Table, where one loaf is broken in many pieces/parts and one cup with many drops, shared by one faith community;

WHEREAS The United Methodist Church celebrates both commonalities and differences in generation, age, theology, culture, race, ethnicity, language, style of leadership, format of worship, method of outreach, method of evangelism, method of communication, preaching styles, trend of growth, and connectional ways, proclaiming that we are many yet we are one;

WHEREAS The United Methodist Church affirms that there is one Spirit with many gifts for many ministries, which is the source of inspiration and motivation to further let the Kingdom of God come on earth—the global missional context—as it is in heaven;

WHEREAS The United Methodist Church (since 1968) has emerged as a strong ecumenical church with ecumenical commitment and priorities, with intentional efforts of seeking out ecumenical relationships, partnerships, and shared ministries, reflecting a deep desire to continue to find new meaning and definition of the word United;

WHEREAS diversity means brothers and sisters in Christ living together in harmony, which is a symphony of many musical instruments and choral voices for the glory of God and for the furtherance of God’s mission, locally and globally;

WHEREAS diversity reflects complementary experiences, which means that many pieces and many gifts beautifully and wonderfully knit or weave together to help the church of Jesus Christ improve, enhance, and eventually makes the mission of God complete. We are one but many. We are many yet one;

WHEREAS the Church of Jesus Christ, like The United Methodist Church, is called to build a beloved community, based on a common heritage that includes one faith, one baptism, one table, one fellowship
(koinonia), which leads all people of God to share everything that God wants us to share, [this means United Methodists are shareholders in common mission and vision];

WHEREAS schism, division, and separation don’t tangibly promise potential for fruitful outcome or fruit bearing ministries, within the challenging global missional context, and further, can cause hazards to health, growth, and vitality of the local churches;

Therefore, be it resolved that
The 2016 General Conference (and beyond) of The United Methodist Church continues to affirm the foundational unity of the denomination or the church;

Be it further resolved that
Petitions, resolutions, and motions that call for schism, division, and separation of all kinds be made null and void;

Be it further resolved that
The General Church, through general boards and agencies, continues to promote the missional, theological, and ecclesiastical value of unity in diversity, along with the Wesleyan philosophy of Methodism “grace in all and grace for all,” across the denomination or the General Church, especially in local churches.

Petition #13: New Resolution for UMCOR to Send Aid to All Who are Persecuted for Their Faith
Submitted by: Ethan Larson

The Resolution:

WHEREAS Middle Eastern Christians are being forced to flee their ancestral homes and watch the eradication of their very identity.

Furthermore, WHEREAS men, women and children are being tortured, enslaved and slaughtered by ISIS as it works for the expansion of an Islamic Caliphate

AND FURTHERMORE WHEREAS Northern Nigerian Christians are under constant threat by Boko Haram and that their villages are attacked and burned, displacing hundreds of thousands, and whose Churches are bombed, men, women and boys slaughtered and girls are taken as slaves;

AND FURTHERMORE WHEREAS Christians in Sudan’s Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile State – targeted by their own government- forced by the Islamic Republics of Sudan’s constant aerial bombardment and attacks by militias to flee as refugees, or to hide in caves or the bush, facing government orchestrated starvation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) take leadership in providing aid and assistance to and for our brothers and sisters in Christ through Advance Special offerings without regard to their denominational affiliation who are being persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ around the world.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that information on the Persecuted Church be provided to local Churches from United Methodist resources as well as Voice of the Martyrs, Open Doors USA, Release International and other source