
Action Item #20: Proposed Balloting Procedures for the Election of Delegates to the 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences

Submitted by: Rev. Susan A. Haller, Conference Secretary

WHEREAS Conference Policy 140.1.0 related to the election of delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conference reads:

140.1.0 Nominations and Elections:

Lay and clergy United Methodists of Wisconsin who are interested in election as General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegates may submit brief biographical sketches of themselves which will be distributed by the Conference Secretary in the pre-Conference materials. The Conference Secretary shall present the balloting procedures during the opening plenary of an election year session for adoption by the Annual Conference.

In addition to the delegates elected to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences, there shall be four clergy and four lay reserve delegates elected to the Jurisdictional Conference.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following procedures shall be used by the 2019 Wisconsin Annual Conference Session for the election of delegates to the 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conference of The United Methodist Church:

Balloting:

- A. Ballots may be taken any time the Conference is in session. Before each ballot following the first ballot, the Bishop shall read the name and vote count of each person who received 10 or more votes on the prior ballot, the names of persons previously elected, and the number of persons to be elected on the present ballot.
- B. When sufficient time has elapsed to mark the ballots, the Bishop shall call upon all those voting to stand and remain standing until their ballots have been collected.

Valid Ballots:

- A. To be valid, a ballot, must include votes for the exact number of eligible individuals that are to be elected on that ballot. If it contains votes for more or fewer persons than are to be elected on that ballot, it shall be an invalid ballot.
- B. Ballots will be scanned electronically, and must be marked with a Number 2 pencil. Ballots marked in ink, which cannot be scanned, will be invalid.
- C. Ballots that contain votes for someone who is not eligible for election will be invalid.
- D. Ballots that the scanner does not read will be checked for accuracy. If those who are counting the ballots can readily discern the proper number, the ballot will be corrected, and providing that all other conditions are correct, it will be counted as valid.

Election: An Amendment to the Constitution of The United Methodist Church which was approved in 2016 now requires that all delegates must be elected by at least a simple majority vote. Therefore, we will continue the balloting process until we have elected three clergy and three lay delegates the 2020 General Conference, and an additional three clergy and three lay delegates to the 2020 North Central Jurisdictional Conference, and four clergy and four lay reserve delegates by a simple majority vote for each candidate elected.

For each of the ballots cast for the election of General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegates, a majority of all the valid ballots shall be necessary for each delegate elected to the General and Jurisdictional Conference delegation.

Reserve Delegates: The Reserve Delegates to General Conference shall consist of the delegates elected to Jurisdictional Conference in the order of their election (*2016 Book of Discipline ¶34*).

Reserve delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference must also be elected by a simple majority vote. Following the ballot on which the final Jurisdictional Conference Delegate(s) are elected, then additional ballots shall be cast to elect four clergy and four lay Reserve Delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference by a majority vote for each candidate elected.

Action Item #21: Proposed Replacement for Conference Policy 10.3.0

Submitted by: The Council on Finance and Administration (CFA), The Connectional Table (CT), and The Appointive Cabinet (AC)

Rationale:

While celebrating various fruitful ministries in our annual conference, we acknowledge the un-tenability and lack of immediate solutions for the denominational struggle over human sexuality. This affects the Wisconsin Annual Conference financial life.

WHEREAS the following adjustment of our policy will allow us to prioritize the mission and ministries of the annual conference while at the same time encouraging full apportionment payment from our congregations.

WHEREAS this policy will enable us to sustain a healthier cash flow, financially support our most fragile ministries with the hope and expectation that General Church apportionments would still be able to be paid at the end of a year rather than on a required monthly basis.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Policy 10.3.0 be revised and replaced as follows:

Current Policy 10.3.0 General Conference Apportionment

~~The Conference Treasurer shall pay General Conference Apportionments in twelve monthly installments of equal amount on or about the last day of the month.~~

Proposed Replacement Conference Policy 10.3.0 General Conference Apportionment

The Conference Treasurer will make General Conference Apportionments as directed by the Council on Finance & Administration, in consultation with the Connectional Table and the Cabinet. When apportionment receipts are projected to be inadequate, priority for funding will be given to ministries within the bounds of the Annual Conference. The Conference Treasurer will send any money designated for General Church Funds to the General Church monthly.

Action Item #22: Proposed Launch Out! Update

Submitted by: Launch Out! Team

WHEREAS at the 2018 session of Annual Conference, the lay and clergy members voted to support the Launch Out! fund-raising/faith-raising campaign to raise \$6.8 million dollars for mercy and justice ministries; the development of new faith communities, congregations, and churches; and the revitalization and critical mission support of existing churches and conference ministries.

WHEREAS Much has happened in the intervening 12 months. The Launch Out! team, cabinet, and on-site campaign director (Brittanie Wilczak) labored long and hard to lay the foundation for a successful and effective campaign. At the same time, short-term cash flow issues within the Annual Conference, and denomination-wide concerns around the special session of General Conference and subsequent Judicial Council rulings, have had a negative impact on regular and capital giving. With so much division and confusion following General Conference, the Launch Out! team, in consultation with the Bishop and cabinet, agreed that this is an appropriate time to “push pause” as we strive to move forward to a clearer and more stable Conference and Denominational position.

WHEREAS The vital mission and ministry priorities that motivated Launch Out! in the first place remain as critically important today as before. However, we realize our churches are engaged in reaction and response to the decisions from General Conference, and we believe that we need to create a “grace margin” – to borrow Bishop Jung’s compelling phrase – to allow our congregations and their individual members time to process all that has happened.

WHEREAS We are very much committed to the long-term goals and objectives of Launch Out! and will implement this funding/faith-raising campaign at a more appropriate and advantageous time. The Launch Out! team will continue to work through this “pause period” to fine tune the financial goals, to communicate the critical mission needs, to determine the best means of allocating funds, and to prepare for a successful conference-wide campaign. We will gladly receive gifts to Launch Out! throughout this pause period, which will allow us to move forward.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Annual Conference continue its support for the Launch Out! campaign but authorize this “pause period” that will provide the grace margin for local churches and their leaders to address the issues raised by our General Conference actions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Launch Out! leadership team will monitor progress and decisions made impacting our life together as the Wisconsin Conference to determine the most appropriate and advantageous time to implement the funding/faith-raising campaign.

Action Item #23: Proposed Replacement for Conference Policy 10.3.0

Submitted by: Rev. Greg Jewison on behalf of the Following Churches:
Bethany United Methodist Church, Madison
First United Methodist Church, Madison
Monona United Methodist Church
Mount Horeb United Methodist Church
People's United Methodist Church, Oregon
Sun Prairie United Methodist Church
The Crossing Campus Ministry - a cooperative ministry of UM,
American Baptist, and UCC denominations

WHEREAS Churches currently must combine support of General Conference and Wisconsin Conference apportioned ministries into the same payment. The proposed language will align support of General Conference ministries with the amount that the local churches actually contribute toward these ministries.

WHEREAS in 2018, the Council on Finance & Administration ordered emergency budget cuts in the middle of the year. Numerous ministries within the Wisconsin Conference were forced to implement severe cutbacks, and several employees of the Wisconsin Conference lost their jobs.

WHEREAS because of how Finance Policy 10.3.0 is currently written, General Conference ministries were supported at 100%, while Wisconsin Conference ministries received far less than 80%.

WHEREAS more recently, churches have begun withholding apportionment payments, as a protest to the General Conference for its decisions on LGBTQ issues. Although these protests are directed at the General Conference, they will have the unintended effect of significantly curtailing support for local Wisconsin Conference ministries, unless the policy language is changed.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Policy 10.3.0 be revised and replaced as follows:

Current Policy 10.3.0 General Conference Apportionment

~~The Conference Treasurer shall pay General Conference Apportionments in twelve monthly installments of equal amount on or about the last day of the month.~~

Proposed Replacement Conference Policy 10.3.0 General Conference Apportionment

The Conference Treasurer shall notify local churches annually of their share of apportionments, separated into two categories: 1) General Conference Apportionments, and 2) the Wisconsin Conference Apportionment. Local churches submitting apportionment payments shall indicate on remittances how much is designated for the various General Conference Apportionments and how much for the Wisconsin Conference Apportionment. The Conference Treasurer shall pay General Conference Apportionments in twelve monthly installments of equal amount on or about the last day of the month, within thirty days of receipt of funds so designated. This policy shall go into effect July 1, 2019.

Action Item #24: Resolution on Anti-Racism Training

Submitted by: Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR)

WHEREAS The Wisconsin Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church supports the need for racial justice and equality and has made one of its priorities “Eradicating Institutional Racism”; and

WHEREAS The growing demographics of the Wisconsin Annual Conference reflects a rich diversity in ministries with the Ethnic Churches and one- third of its clergy appointments are cross-racial and cross-cultural; and

WHEREAS Our common heritage is founded on God’s love for us and by virtue of this love we are one in Christ whom, there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, thus affirming that racism, which promotes discrimination, is a sin.

WHEREAS The Charter for Racial Justice responds to the question “What is Racism?” with the following:

“Racism is the use of power for maintaining privilege and systematic discrimination through institutions and structures of society in order:

- To deny access to education, employment, housing, social services and other rights and benefits of society either by law or by custom.
- To perpetuate, solidify and guarantee the economic, political and social power of one group over other groups.

Racism can be easy to see or hidden, intentional or unintentional. Its impact is measured by its effects, not by personal motivations. Racism combines with other identity issues such as gender, economic status or national origin to multiply its effects.”

WHEREAS There are some 58,764 clergy and lay members of the Wisconsin Annual Conference and of those, 908 are Latino/Hispanic, 876 are Asian, 538 are Black/Pan-African, 191 are Native American, 41 are Pacific Islander, 975 are Multi-Racial and 55,235 are White (per the 2017 Conference Statistics);

WHEREAS There is 1 full-time Black congregation in the State of Wisconsin and 4 Black congregations in total. There are 57 Latino/Hispanic, 78 Asian, 29 Black/Pan-African, 3 Native American, and 775 White clergy members in the Wisconsin Annual Conference.

WHEREAS Racism has been evident in this conference by the treatment of some persons of color as less than and unqualified; while also regarding some of their cultural traditions and perspectives as insignificant and unequal to the importance of the dominant white culture.

WHEREAS We recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons. We recognize the need to rejoice in the gifts that particular ethnic histories and cultures bring to our total life. We recognize the need to commit as the Church to move beyond symbolic expressions and representative models that do not challenge unjust systems of power and access.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED That each quadrennium all clergy, elected conference leadership and conference staff be required to attend a conference-sponsored training on eradicating racism designed in collaboration with the Wisconsin Annual Conference’s Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR) and Commission on Religion and Race (CORR); and that this training shall be offered annually.

Action Item #25: Resolution of A Vision Forward for the Wisconsin Annual Conference

Submitted by: Rev. Krysta Deede with Rev. Allie Scott, Rev. PyungAhn “Peace” Kim, Rev. Susan Haller, Rev. Cathy Weigand, Rev. Julie Wilson, Rev. Joan Frost, Ravi Roelfs, Donna Veatch, Rev. Jean Ehnert Nicholas and Cameron Malakai

WHEREAS in the climate of deep denominational disagreement, the Spirit is moving and is inspiring a future for the Wisconsin Annual Conference, and

WHEREAS we believe in God, Creator of Heaven and Earth, who made us all in the Divine image (*Gen 1:27*), who binds up the brokenhearted and releases the captives (*Is. 61:1*), and

WHEREAS we believe in Jesus Christ, God-with-us, who gave us the commandment to love one another (*John 13:34*), was executed by the empire on behalf of religious authorities (*Luke 23:23-24*), and whose resurrection provides us hope, transformation and reconciliation, and

WHEREAS we believe in the Holy Spirit, our Advocate, who is at work in the world and brings us new ways of hearing and understanding each other (*Acts 2:4*), the One who set John Wesley’s heart aflame in 1738; and

WHEREAS, we are Christians in the Wesleyan tradition striving to keep the Spirit’s fire burning in our current contexts through worship, discipleship, and mission; and

WHEREAS, the Traditional Plan, as drafted, presented and adopted at the 2019 General Conference, does irreparable harm to the full expression of the body and is inconsistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ, and

WHEREAS The United Methodist Church is deeply divided - which we believe is a hindrance to its mission in the world (*¶¶120-125 The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*)

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church adopt the following Vision for the future of the Church moving forward into a new expression of Methodism:

- We envision a Methodism that is rooted in Jesus, grounded in Wesleyan theology, inclusive of all persons, and engaged in the work of justice, reconciliation and liberation, and
- We envision a Methodism that affirms the full participation of all gender identities, sexual orientations, races, cultures, classes, abilities, ages, and nations, and
- We envision a Methodism that affirms the sacred worth of PoC+Q+T (Persons of Color + Queer + Trans) persons, celebrates their gifts, and commits to being in ministry together.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Wisconsin Annual Conference reject the decision of the 2019 General Conference to adopt the Traditional Plan as the way forward for the United Methodist Church in order that we might:

- Center the voices of PoC+Q+T (Persons of Color + Queer + Trans) people that have been historically and systematically silenced and unheeded, bringing their voices toward the center of the new Methodism, allowing their stories, struggles and dreams to lead it, and

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- Affirm each clergy-person's prayerful discernment in officiating wedding ceremonies for any prepared couple who comes to them and the discernment of our Board of Ordained Ministry to evaluate candidates for ordination, licensing, and candidacy, so that we may live into the first General Rule; "Do No Harm."
 - Stand in shared resurrected solidarity that the new expression of Methodism lives into the reality that we are rooted in mutual connection and interdependence (*1 Cor. 12:26*), so that we may live into the second General Rule; "Do Good."
 - Acknowledge the ways we fall short of the Glory of God and, in turn, discern God's voice in leading us toward liberation. We will focus on developing relationships and beloved community, heed God's voice when any person is called to ordination or life-giving relationships, including marriage, and live lives of personal piety and social holiness, so that we may live into the third general rule, "stay in love with God."
 - With joy and thanksgiving, the Wisconsin Annual Conference will welcome all God's people, celebrating the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion as signs of God's grace, open to all who love Christ, earnestly strive to love one another and seek to live in peace together.