



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 CONSEIL JUDICIAIRE DE L'ÉGLISE METHODISTE UNIE
 RECHTSHOF DER EVANGELISCH-METHODISTISCHEN KIRCHE
 CONSELHO JUDICIAL DA IGREJA METODISTA UNIDA
 CONSEJO DE LA JUDICATURA DE LA IGLESIA METODISTA UNIDA



Petition for Declaratory Decision

This form is to be used by the Secretary of the body authorized to petition the Judicial Council for a ruling in the nature of a declaratory decision as to the constitutionality, meaning, application, or effect of (please check one):

- The Book of Discipline 2016* or any portion thereof (§ 2610.1)
- any act or legislation of a General Conference (§ 2610.1)
- any proposed legislation (§ 2609.2)

Name of body authorized to make a Petition (§ 2610.2): The Commission on the General Conference

Date of session: November 7, 2016(month/day/year) Location: Jacksonville, FL

Name of Secretary: Mrs. Kim Simpson

Address: 1 Music Circle N City: Nashville

State/Province: TN ZIP/Postal Code 37203 Country: U.S.A.

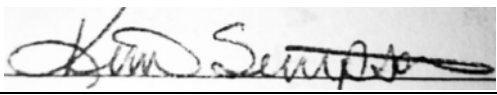
Phone: 615-369-2352 Fax: 615-369-2405 E-mail: generalconference@umcgc.org

To be reviewed (indicate paragraph number, title of legislation and/or act where applicable):

Book of Discipline: ¶¶ 13, 14, 15, 34, 35, 36, and 511

Legislation: _____

Act of General Conference: Plan of Organization and Rules of Order for the General Conference

Signature: 

Secretary of the Conference/Body

Date: July 14, 2018

(month/day/year)

The following must be attached:

- Text of the written Petition for Declaratory Decision as originally presented
- Minutes of proceedings (relevant portions only)
- List of names and addresses of interested parties, including e-mail
- Other relevant materials (e.g. conference rules, resolutions, policies, reports)

- Eight (8) hard copies must be submitted via USPS or other delivery service to:
 Secretary of the Judicial Council, 5556 N. Sheridan Road, #610, Chicago, IL 60640, USA
- Electronic copies in both Word and PDF (with security features disabled) must be submitted to:
 secretaryjudicialcouncil@gmail.com

**BEFORE THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

ON THE MATTER OF THE REQUEST FOR A DECLARATORY)
DECISION ON THE MEANING, APPLICATION, AND EFFECT OF)
¶¶ 13, 14, 15, 34, 35, 36, AND 511 OF *THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE*)
2016 IN RELATION TO A VIOLATION OF THE GENERAL)
CONFERENCE RULES OF ORDER)

The Commission on the General Conference of The United Methodist Church (“the Commission”) respectfully requests the Judicial Council to issue a declaratory decision on the meaning, application, and effect of ¶¶ 13, 14, 15, 34, 35, 36, and 511 of *The Book of Discipline 2016* in relation to a violation of the General Conference Rules of Order.

Jurisdiction

The Judicial Council has jurisdiction pursuant to ¶ 2610.1 of *The Book of Discipline 2016*.

Standing

The Commission has standing to request a declaratory decision pursuant to ¶ 2610.2c of *The Book of Discipline 2016*. The Commission voted to request this declaratory decision on November 7, 2016.

Law

The General Conference shall be composed of lay and clergy delegates elected by the annual conferences in a fair and open process (¶ 13), and the General Conference shall have a fixed ratio of representation (¶ 15) calculated with eligible clergy and lay delegates according to the

prescriptions set forth in *The Book of Discipline 2016* (§§ 35-36). Additional delegates to jurisdictional or central conference shall be the reserve delegates to the General Conference; furthermore, reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional or central conferences may act as reserve delegates to the General Conference when it is evident that not enough reserve delegates are in attendance at the General Conference (§ 34). The Commission shall take necessary measures to assure full participation of all General Conference delegates (§ 511.4d).

The General Conference has the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order for the purpose of helping “the General Conference be a means of grace, discerning God’s will and striving for Christ-like wisdom in all of our decisions” (Preamble, Plan of Organization and Rules of Order). The Committee on Ethics reviews all matters concerning alleged violations of the rules that are referred to it, either by the Office of the Secretary of the General Conference or directly by a one-fifth vote of the Plenary, and reports its findings to the Plenary with recommended action (Plan of Organization VII.C.).

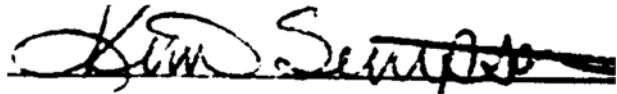
Requested Decision

The Commission on the General Conference of The United Methodist Church respectfully requests a decision of law on the following question: **Does the General Conference of The United Methodist Church have the authority to remove, by vote, a delegate of the body for a violation of the rules of ethics as printed and passed in the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order for the General Conference:**

A) when there is a reserve delegate available to be seated?

B) when there is no reserve delegate available to be seated?

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim Simpson", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Mrs. Kim Simpson

Secretary

Commission on the General Conference

The United Methodist Church

List of Interested Parties in Docket No. 1018-13

Chair, Commission on the General Conference
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Chair, Committee on the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order
Commission on the General Conference
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Business Manager of the General Conference
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Minutes of proceedings (relevant portions only)

Commission on the General Conference
Omni Hotel, Jacksonville, Florida
November 7, 2016

Attendance:

Officers: Duncan McMillan, Chairperson; Mujinga Kashala, ViceChairperson; Kim Simpson, Secretary.

Members: Helene Bindl, Francis Charley, Beth Ann Cook, Phebe Cosmiano, Joseph DiPaolo, Christine Flick, Steven Furr, Jim Haun, Stephanie Henry, Lynn Hill, John Hiller, Stanislas Kassongo, Betty Katiyo, Marie Kuch-Stanovsky, Jorge Lockward, Mills Maliwa, Laura Merrill, Joseph Mulongo, Ellen Natt, Juliet Spencer, Audun Westad

Ex-Officio: Fitzgerald Reist, Secretary of the GC; Gary Graves, Secretary-Designate of the GC; Sara Hotchkiss, Business Manager of the GC; Bishop Thomas Bickerton, Council of Bishops Representative.

Observers: Susan Brumbaugh, Coordinator of the Calendar; Diane Degnan, Director of Public Relations; David Garvin, Petitions Secretary; Raquel Perez-Molloy, Assistant Business Manager of the GC; Don Reasoner, Director of Interpretation Services; Brian Sigmon, Editor, DCA; Bishop Rodolfo Juan, COB Observer; Steve Lambert, General Counsel, GCFA; Amy Valdez-Barker, Executive Secretary of the Connectional Table, Meredith Hoxie-Schol, Connectional Table; Kathy Gilbert, UM News Service.

[Relevant Excerpt from Minutes]

Rules Committee: [Report by Stephanie Henry, Chair of Rules Committee]

Bishop Bickerton organized for election of officers. Those elected were: Chair, Stephanie Henry; Vice-Chair, Audun Westad; Secretary, Marie Kuch-Stanovsky.

This Motion was brought from the Committee: We recommend to the Commission On General Conference to request a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church under Paragraphs 13, 14, 15, 34, 35, 36, and 511 of The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church:

- Does the GC of the UMC have the authority to remove, by vote, a delegate of the body for a violation of the rules of ethics as printed and passed in the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order for the General Conference:

A) when there is a reserve delegate available to be seated?

B) when there is no reserve delegate available to be seated?

Motion passed.

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

3
4 **PREAMBLE**

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

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

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PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

I. Opening Session and Organization

The General Conference will assemble at the set time and place beginning with worship.

The opening business session of the Conference shall be called to order by the bishop designated, as provided in the *Book of Discipline* ¶ 16.11.

The following order of business shall be observed:

- A. Roll Call. The record of attendance shall be made in writing to the Secretary of the General Conference by:
 - 1) The Secretary of the Council of Bishops for the bishops,
 - 2) The Secretary of the Judicial Council for that body,
 - 3) The Executive Secretary of the Connectional Table for all general secretaries,
 - 4) The chairperson of each annual conference delegation for its membership (See Rule 5), and
 - 5) The chairperson of each delegation for Concordat, Affiliated Autonomous Methodist and United Churches.
- B. Establish the bar of the conference.
- C. Report of the Commission on the General Conference.
 - 1) Adoption of the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order
- D. Elections
 - 1) Coordinator of Calendar (See IV.C)
- E. Report of Committee on Agenda.
- F. Miscellaneous Business.
- G. Adjournment.

II. Episcopal, Laity, and Young People Addresses

55 The Quadrennial Addresses shall be delivered early in the Conference, at such hour as
56 determined by the Commission on the General Conference. The Council of Bishops shall
57 coordinate the preparation and presentation of the Quadrennial Episcopal Address. The
58 Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders shall coordinate the preparation and presentation
59 of the Quadrennial Lay Address. This opportunity shall be open to all annual conference lay
60 leaders. The United Methodist Division of Ministries with Young People shall coordinate the
61 preparation and presentation of the Quadrennial Young People Address. This opportunity shall be
62 open to all young people.

63

64 **III. Presiding Officers**

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

68

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

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

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

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

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

83 E. A budget for the work of the Secretary of the General Conference shall be presented by the

84 Commission on the General Conference to the General Council on Finance and Administration.
85 Such budget shall be paid out of the General Administration Fund.
86 F. If in the interim of the quadrennial sessions of the General Conference the office of the
87 Secretary of the General Conference shall be vacated for any reason, the Council of Bishops
88 shall elect a successor to serve until the next session.

89

90 **V. Nominations and Elections**

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

99

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

101 General Council on Finance and Administration (§ 805.1)

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

103 General Commission on Archives and History (§ 1704.2)

104 The University Senate (§ 1414.2)

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

106 and Episcopal membership on:

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

108 General Board of Discipleship (§ 705.4d)

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

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

111

112 The *Daily Christian Advocate* shall publish the list of nominees for election to the Judicial

113 Council and the University Senate. Biographical sketches not to exceed 100 words in
114 length shall be submitted by each nominee and shall be published as submitted.

115

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

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

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

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

128

129 **VII. Committees**

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

132

133 **A. Administrative Committees**

134 The members of the following committees shall be appointed by the Council of Bishops
135 at its fall meeting preceding the General Conference. All except the Committee on Correlation
136 and Editorial Revision shall be from the elected delegates to the General Conference (See
137 Section V). Members of administrative committees that meet prior to the day on which
138 the General Conference convenes shall receive the delegate per diem for each additional
139 day on which their attendance is required. Delegates who are appointed to such committees less
140 than 60 days prior to the opening session of General Conference shall be entitled to
141 reimbursement for any additional transportation costs.

142

143 **1) Agenda and Calendar**

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

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

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

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

158 (2) Inform the bishop presiding as soon as possible of the agenda items,

159 including order of priority, to be considered,

160 (3) Keep an overview of calendar progress;

161 (4) Report recommendations to each session of the General Conference

162 concerning business agenda, including time allocation and order in which

163 legislative committee reports shall be presented;

164 (5) Give priority in plenary for legislative consideration as calendar items become

165 available: first to items affecting the global church, second to items with financial

166 implications, and third to items with minority reports;

167 (6) Announce, at the last plenary session of each day, a tentative agenda for the next day;

168 (7) Consult daily with the legislative committee chairpersons to expedite

169 the business of the General Conference; and

170 (8) Receive all requests for special orders of the day, except those in the report of the

171 Commission on the General Conference on the first day of the Conference.
172 (c) Proposals, questions, communications, resolutions, and other matters not included in the
173 regular business of the General Conference shall be referred to the Committee on Agenda and
174 Calendar without motion or debate. This committee shall determine whether the matter
175 presented shall be considered by the General Conference. A decision of this committee may
176 be appealed by submitting to the Conference the signatures of ten delegates. The item shall
177 be presented to the Conference if the appeal is supported by a one-third vote.

178

179 **2) Correlation and Editorial Revision**

180 There shall be a Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision of eight
181 persons and two alternates not delegates to the General Conference, and the
182 Book Editor or designee, who shall be an ex-officio member. They shall be
183 entitled to reimbursement of expenses for attendance at meetings of the
184 committee. The Book Editor or designee shall convene the committee for the
185 purpose of organization. During the session of General Conference and following its
186 adjournment, the function of this committee shall be:

187 (a) To review all proposed legislation reported in the *Daily Christian Advocate* or
188 presented in special reports to the General Conference. The committee shall report to
189 the committees concerned, or to the General Conference as the situation may warrant,
190 all contradictions, duplications, and inconsistencies discovered.

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

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

195

196 **3) Courtesies and Privileges**

197 There shall be a Committee on Courtesies and Privileges
198 composed of twelve members, one from each central
199 conference and jurisdiction, at least six of whom shall be laypersons. The

200 committee shall be convened by a bishop for the purpose of organization. The

201 committee has the following duties and responsibilities:

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

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

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

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

215

216 **4) Credentials**

217 There shall be a Committee on Credentials composed of twelve members,
218 one from each central conference and jurisdiction, at least six of whom shall be laypersons.

219 The committee shall be convened by a bishop for the purpose of organization.

220 The committee shall provide guidance to the Secretary of the General Conference

221 regarding the approval of credentials of delegates, and may review decisions

222 regarding the seating of delegates, including reserve delegates. The committee shall

223 report to the General Conference its decisions and recommendations regarding challenges

224 to the seating of any delegates.

225

226 **5) Journal**

227 There shall be a Committee on the Journal of three delegates to approve daily the record of

228 Proceedings of the General Conference prepared by the Secretary of the General Conference

229 and assistant(s). The committee shall be convened by a bishop for the purpose of organization.

230

231 **6) Presiding Officers**

232 There shall be a Committee on Presiding Officers composed of twelve members,

233 one from each central conference and jurisdiction, six of whom shall be

234 clergy and six of whom shall be laypersons. The committee shall be convened by a bishop

235 for the purpose of organization. The committee shall select and notify the presiding officer(s)

236 of each plenary session at least 24 hours in advance, insofar as possible. The committee shall be

237 free to select a bishop for more than one session and to change the presiding officer

238 during the session, whenever it seems advisable (See Section III).

239

240 **7) Reference**

241 There shall be a Committee on Reference composed of twenty-four members, one

242 clergy and one lay person from each central conference and jurisdiction. The membership of

243 this committee shall include at least one member from each legislative committee who will be

244 designated as petition coordinator for their legislative committee. If possible, petition coordinators

245 should have served previously on a General Conference legislative committee. These petition

246 coordinators shall serve as advisors to the officers of the legislative committee of which

247 they are members. Additional members from the Committee on Reference shall assist the petition

248 coordinator in the legislative committee of which they are members. This committee shall be

249 convened, for the purpose of organization, by the Secretary of the General Conference, or

250 designee, the day prior to the opening of the General Conference.

251

252 (a) After reviewing the proposed assignments by the Secretary of the General Conference of the

253 petitions, resolutions, and similar communications dealing with the regular business of the

254 Conference to legislative committees, this committee shall refer the same to the appropriate

255 legislative committees (See Section IV.D). This committee shall also be responsible for reviewing

256 the assignment, by the Secretary of the General Conference, of all reports, recommendations,

257 and resolutions from general agencies, standing or special commissions and committees, and all

258 other communications which are submitted to the Secretary of the General Conference after the
259 convening of the General Conference, all of which shall be referred directly to appropriate
260 legislative committees without presentation to a plenary session of the General Conference.

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

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

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

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

271

272 **B. Advance Legislative Research Panel**

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

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

283 (c) All petitions received, after being compiled by Disciplinary
284 paragraphs, shall be assigned by legislative committee among the
285 panel members. The panel members, in turn, will review all the
286 petitions they have been assigned and locate any other paragraphs of

287 the *Book of Discipline*, including the Constitution, which are closely
288 related to the subject matter of the petition, as well as closely related
289 Judicial Council decisions and memoranda. The panel member shall
290 then record the related paragraph, decision, or memoranda with each
291 petition.

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

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

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

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

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

303

304 **C. Committee on Ethics**

305 There shall be a Committee on Ethics, comprised of the members of the Committee of the Plan of
306 Organization and Rules of Order of the General Conference. Individual delegates may report their
307 concerns about alleged violations of the rules to the Secretary of the General Conference who
308 shall investigate, attempt to resolve all such claims, and report the resolution to the
309 Committee on Ethics and to the delegate(s) who raised the concern. Based on the severity
310 of the concerns, the Secretary of the General Conference may refer the matter to the
311 Committee on Ethics. Alleged violations of the rules may also be referred directly to the
312 Committee on Ethics by a one-fifth vote of the Plenary. The Committee on Ethics shall review
313 all matters referred to it and report its findings to the Plenary with recommended action.

314

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

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

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

320 *Book of Discipline* paragraphs

321 28-31..... Constitution: Central Conferences

322 423..... Conference of Methodist Bishops

323 540-548..... Central Conferences

324 560-567..... Provisional Central Conferences

325 570-575..... Autonomous Methodist, Affiliated Autonomous Methodist, Affiliated

326 United, Covenanting, and Concordat Churches

327 2201..... Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters

328

329 The Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters shall submit its report and any

330 legislative proposals related to the paragraphs assigned to it directly to the General

331 Conference. If the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters has a concern

332 for any paragraphs assigned to one of the legislative committees, the Committee

333 shall offer its recommendation to the appropriate legislative committee

334 for consideration and recommendation to the General Conference.

335

336 **E. Legislative Committees**

337 There shall be legislative committees to whom all properly submitted petitions

338 and reports shall be assigned. The Commission on the General Conference shall

339 set the number of legislative committees and the assignment of Disciplinary

340 paragraphs and topics to those committees in consultation with the Secretary of

341 the General Conference and the Business Manager of the General Conference

342 (¶ 511.4.f). Any legislative committee considering legislation affecting the

343 responsibilities assigned to the Standing Committee on Central Conference

344 Matters shall consult with the committee before submitting its proposed

345 legislation to the Conference.

346

347 **F. Membership of Legislative Committees**

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

350

351 In 2016, the laity first elected, shall be entitled to the first choice, the clergy
352 delegate first elected, the second choice, and thus the right of choice shall continue to alternate
353 between lay and clergy delegates in the order of their election. For
354 subsequent General Conferences, first choice shall alternate between the
355 clergy and lay delegates according to the following schedule:

356 2020 clergy

357 2024 laity

358 2028 clergy

359 2032 laity

360 2036 clergy

361 2040 laity

362 Two members of a delegation may not serve on the same legislative
363 committee unless the said delegation is represented on all of them. Whenever a delegation
364 has more than one delegate on a legislative committee, its delegates shall be divided
365 as equally as possible between lay and clergy. Thus, if there are three delegates on
366 a committee, they shall be two clergy and one lay or vice versa. The Secretary of the
367 General Conference shall provide these instructions and examples with the election of
368 delegate instructions sent to each annual conference secretary.

369

370 2) If a matter is under consideration in any legislative committee which in the
371 judgment of any annual conference delegation vitally affects the interests of its
372 constituency, and if the said annual conference is not represented in the membership of said
373 committee, then the delegation may choose one of its delegates to represent its annual

374 conference in the committee when the aforementioned matter is under consideration.
375 This delegate shall be entitled to sit with the committee while this particular
376 matter is being considered and shall have voice, but not vote (See Section VII.G.3.(e)).
377

378 3) Each person seated in the General Conference with voice but not vote may submit
379 to the Secretary of the General Conference a choice of a legislative committee
380 and shall have the same right in that committee to voice but not vote.
381

382 **G. Meetings of Committees**

383 1) Organization and Quorum of Committees. All legislative and administrative
384 committees shall meet for organization at a time determined by the Commission on the
385 General Conference. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for the
386 transaction of business in all committees.
387

388 Consistent with the spirit of ¶ 722 in the *Book of Discipline*, meetings of General
389 Conference committees and subcommittees shall be open.
390

391 2) Administrative Committees

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

395 (b) The election of chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary of each administrative
396 committee shall be by separate sequential written ballot for each position.

397 Due consideration shall be given for inclusiveness that reflects the global nature
398 of the church, including gender, age, ethnicity, geography, young people, clergy, and lay.

399 3) Legislative Committees

400 All legislative committees shall meet for organization at such time as the Commission on the
401 General Conference shall determine. A bishop appointed by the Council of Bishops and an
402 organizing secretary appointed by the Secretary of the General Conference shall serve,

403 respectively, as chairperson and secretary, to organize each of the several committees. The first
404 meeting of the legislative committees shall be held as soon as possible following the first plenary
405 session of the General Conference. The orientation of the committee, followed by the
406 election of officers, shall be the order of business of the first meeting of the committee.

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

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

419 (c) Parliamentarians. Each legislative committee shall be assigned a parliamentarian by the
420 Secretary of the General Conference. Retired bishops nominated by the Council of
421 Bishops shall be included in the pool of parliamentarians. It shall be the responsibility
422 of the Business Manager of the General Conference to develop a pool of other people not
423 currently delegates to serve as parliamentarians. It is preferred that these persons
424 be members of The United Methodist Church, have knowledge of the Rules of
425 the General Conference, and have training in parliamentary procedure. The retired bishops
426 shall be given priority in being assigned to legislative committees. At the invitation
427 of the presiding officer, the parliamentarian advises on matters of parliamentary procedure.

428 (d) Regular Meetings. The legislative committees shall meet for business as scheduled
429 by the Agenda and Calendar Committee unless otherwise ordered by the Conference,
430 and at such other times as the committees may determine provided that no legislative
431 committee shall meet at times that conflict with plenary sessions. Any

432 legislation not completed by the legislative committee at the time of the Saturday
433 evening adjournment of the first week of General Conference shall remain
434 unfinished and legislative committees shall be adjourned (See Rule 37).

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

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

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

451

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

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

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

460

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

462 A. Any action proposed to the General Conference plenary to establish an interim or
463 continuing board, commission, committee, or task force shall be referred to the General
464 Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table or their executive
465 committees or their expenditure review group for a report and recommendation before
466 final action is taken. The General Council on Finance and Administration and
467 the Connectional Table or their executive committees or their expenditure review group
468 shall provide the General Conference with the following before action is taken:
469 1) an estimated budget for the proposed board, commission, committee or task force
470 for the next quadrennium; and
471 2) a statement explaining how the creation of the proposed board, commission, committee,
472 or task force will affect the budget or budgets for existing boards, commissions, committees
473 and task forces already presented by the General Council on Finance and Administration.

474
475 B. Any action proposed to the General Conference plenary that involves the expenditure of
476 funds shall be referred to the General Council on Finance and Administration and the
477 Connectional Table or their executive committees or their expenditure review group
478 for advice and recommendation before final action is taken. Any general agency requests
479 for supplemental funds shall be identified as such; otherwise, they shall be considered as
480 having been included within the agency budget.

481
482 C. Any proposal falling under the provisions of this section shall be referred to the
483 General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table or their
484 executive committees or their expenditure review group at least seventy-two hours
485 prior to the scheduled adjournment of the General Conference.

486
487 **IX. Delegate Expenses**

488 A. Full travel expenses and per diem shall be paid for the number of allotted voting
489 delegates from each conference according to the report of the chairperson of each

490 annual conference delegation. If during the conference, a reserve delegate is seated
491 for a principal delegate for one or more full days, the principal delegate shall adjust
492 the per diem with such reserve based on the time served by each.

493
494 B. Air travel shall be by the most economical round-trip coach airfare directly to and
495 from the site of the General Conference. Special excursion and promotional fares shall be
496 utilized whenever possible. Additional expenses may be allowed delegates from conferences
497 outside the United States for arrival and departure not to exceed two days before or after General
498 Conference. The per diem expense allowance for all such days before and after General Conference
499 shall be at the same rate as granted delegates during General Conference. Exceptions to
500 these limitations must be approved by the Business Manager of the General Conference.

501
502 C. When one or more delegates come in the same automobile, the owner will be
503 reimbursed for the actual cost of travel (parking, en route mileage and tolls, en route meals and
504 lodging). Mileage shall be reimbursed at the business rate established by the IRS and will be
505 measured from point of origin to the site of General Conference and return. Meals and lodging shall
506 be reimbursed up to the established General Conference per diem. When the round trip exceeds
507 1,000 miles for any one round trip, the cost of transportation shall be paid either on the actual
508 costs as defined above or at the most economical airfare available plus airport-related ground
509 transportation cost, whichever is less. Passengers who are the principal
510 voting delegates to the General Conference shall submit only the cost of room
511 and meals en route up to the established General Conference per diem rate.

512
513 D. For the dates General Conference is in session, no General Conference delegate shall
514 receive expense money from the general Church or any of its boards and agencies other
515 than approved per diem and travel expenses available to all delegates. This provision is
516 not to restrict official assistance to delegates from their own annual conferences.

517

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

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

522
523 B. The Book Editor, the Secretary of the General Conference, the Publisher of The United
524 Methodist Church, and the Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision shall be
525 charged with editing the *Book of Discipline*. Any Disciplinary amendments that are not
526 dependent on constitutional amendments for their effective date will be incorporated in
527 the appropriate paragraphs of the *Book of Discipline* in the order of their adoption.

528
529 The editors, in the exercise of their judgment, shall have the authority to make
530 changes in wording as may be necessary to harmonize legislation without changing its
531 substance. The editors, in consultation with the Judicial Council, shall also have authority to
532 delete provisions of the *Book of Discipline* that have been ruled unconstitutional by the Judicial
533 Council. Any challenge of a decision made by the Committee on Correlation and Editorial
534 Revision shall be in writing. If the matter should go to the Judicial Council, the appealing party
535 shall give notice thereof to the committee. Any established errata in the *Book of Discipline*
536 shall be forwarded by The United Methodist Publishing House to the Council of
537 Bishops, the Secretary of the General Conference, Annual Conference Secretaries, and
538 Annual Conference Directors of Connectional Ministries, and shall be published
539 by the Book Editor on The United Methodist Publishing House website.

540
541 Constitutional amendments certified in accordance with ¶ 59 and enabling legislation
542 adopted in anticipation of the Constitutional amendments shall be published by the Book Editor on
543 the United Methodist Publishing House website following certification. They shall be published
544 in the subsequent *Book of Discipline*. The Constitutional amendments take effect at the
545 time of certification. The enabling legislation will be effective on January 1, of the year
546 following the certification of the constitutional amendments and will be given effect as if it
547 had been adopted after all other Disciplinary changes affecting a particular paragraph.

548

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

550 After the first day, only the *Daily Christian Advocate* and materials related to General

551 Conference presentations and produced by official bodies of The United Methodist

552 Church approved by the Secretary of the General Conference shall be distributed by

553 the pages. Pages will distribute communications to individual delegates provided

554 the communication bears the name and location of both the recipient and the sender.

555

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

557 Newsletters or any special interest material from United Methodist boards, agencies, and related

558 United Methodist groups may be distributed under the following conditions:

559

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

562

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

565

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

570

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

573

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

577

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

579

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

581

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

583 The reports, recommendations, and resolutions requiring action by the General Conference,

584 as well as petitions submitted in accordance with the *Book of Discipline* ¶ 507.7, shall

585 first be assigned a Petition Number by the Secretary of the General Conference or the

586 Petitions Secretary and then shall be published in an Advance Edition of the *Daily Christian*

587 *Advocate* and distributed to all delegates and to the first clergy and first lay reserve delegates

588 at least ninety days prior to the opening of the General Conference. Reports shall be published

589 in the same style as the *Daily Christian Advocate*. In order to accomplish this, the finished

590 copy of all such reports and recommendations shall be submitted to the editor of the *Daily*

591 *Christian Advocate* at least 210 days prior to the opening of the General Conference. Reports and

592 recommendations not published in an Advance Edition of the *Daily Christian Advocate*

593 may be received by the General Conference only upon three-fourths vote of the General Conference.

594 The General Council on Finance and Administration shall be exempt from this requirement

595 to the extent necessary to allow inclusion of general funds receipts information for the first

596 three years of the quadrennium. The General Council on Finance and Administration

597 will provide data including the third year of the quadrennium and other appropriate

598 information to delegates prior to the convening of the General Conference.

599

600

RULES OF ORDER

601

602 **I. Daily Schedule**

603 *Rule 1. Hours of Meetings*

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

- 605 (1) 8:00 A.M. Morning Praise and Prayer
- 606 (2) 8:20 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. Christian conferencing through plenary or
- 607 committee meetings
- 608 (3) 1:30 or 2:30 P.M. (as specified by the daily schedule) to 5:00 P.M.
- 609 Christian conferencing through plenary or committee meetings
- 610 (4) During a Memorial Service, the names of the bishops, bishops' spouses, and delegates-elect
- 611 who have died since the adjournment of the previous General Conference shall be called.
- 612 (5) Recess may be called during any plenary session at a time deemed appropriate by the
- 613 presiding officer.
- 614 (6) Daily adjournment shall be called by 6:30 P.M. each evening, except for
- 615 the day when leader training is scheduled and Saturday when adjournment shall be
- 616 called by 9:30 P.M. Adjournment shall be an order of the day.

617

618 *Rule 2. Order of Christian Conferencing*

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

- 620 (1) Reports of administrative and special committees
- 621 (2) Agenda and calendar items
- 622 (3) Consent calendar (See Rule 33.5)
- 623 (4) Miscellaneous business

624

625 **II. Presiding Officers**

626 *Rule 3. Authority of the Presiding Officer*

- 627 (1) The presiding officer (plenary, administrative committees, legislative committees, and
- 628 sub-committees) shall decide and rule on points of order. A delegate may appeal the ruling
- 629 to the body without debate, except that the presiding officer and the appellant, in the order here
- 630 named, shall each have three minutes for a statement in support of their respective positions.
- 631 A tie vote in the case of appeal shall sustain the presiding officer (See Rule 31.5).
- 632 Any delegate who raises a point of order shall cite the rule believed to have been violated.
- 633 (2) At the discretion of the presiding officer, a time for prayerful discernment may be taken

634 during deliberation. Such a time should be for group meditation and prayer and shall end at
635 the call of the presiding officer, at which time deliberation shall be resumed.

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

642
643 *Rule 4. Calling the Conference to Order*

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

646
647 **III. Rights and Duties of Delegates**

648 *Rule 5. Attendance and Seating Reserves*

649 The chairperson of each delegation shall be provided with a form on which to report daily the
650 attendance of its delegates. Any reserve seated in the place of a regular delegate shall have
651 been duly elected as a reserve delegate by the annual conference and shall meet the
652 requirements set forth in the *Book of Discipline* ¶¶ 34-36. Delegates, including reserves
653 when the latter are substituted for a delegate or delegates, shall be seated in the order of their
654 election, except when a reserve is seated temporarily or in case of special need as
655 determined by the delegation chairperson. The reserve shall occupy the seat of the delegate
656 for whom the substitution is made. Reserves shall not be seated for delegates presenting
657 on the platform. All delegates arriving after the opening roll call shall be reported by the
658 chairperson of the delegation to the Secretary of the General Conference or designee. No delegate
659 who is duly registered, unless hindered by sickness or other emergency, shall be absent from
660 the sessions of the Conference without permission of the Conference. All absences shall be
661 reported by the chairpersons of the delegations to the Secretary of the General
662 Conference or designee on a form provided for this purpose. Reserve delegates are to function

663 within the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference (See Rules 29 and 33). A reserve
664 delegate may be seated upon authority of the chairperson of the delegation who shall report the
665 substitution in writing to the Secretary of the General Conference or designee on a form
666 provided for this purpose. Reserves are chosen to be seated:

- 667 (1) by reason of being of the same order as the absent delegate,
668 (2) in order of their election as reserve delegates.

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

671

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

673 A delegate desiring to speak to the Conference shall use the tablet at the table to register and
674 make a request to speak. The presiding bishop shall choose from the requests and direct the
675 speaker to the appropriate microphone. Unless raising a point of order or parliamentary inquiry, the
676 delegate shall not speak until given the floor. The bishop presiding shall consider
677 the various sections of the auditorium in rotation. The delegate recognized
678 shall first announce her or his name and the name of the conference represented and their
679 reason for speaking. A delegate recognized by the presiding bishop may not yield the floor to
680 another delegate. In the event of tablet failure, a delegate desiring to speak to the Conference
681 shall hold up the appropriate placard to be recognized by the bishop presiding.

682

683 *Rule 7. Plenary Speakers For and Against*

684 (1) When the report of a committee is under consideration, it shall be the duty of the bishop
685 presiding to ascertain, when recognizing a delegate to the Conference, on which side
686 the delegate proposes to speak; the bishop presiding shall not assign the floor to any
687 delegate proposing to speak on the same side of the pending question as the speaker
688 immediately preceding if any delegate desires to speak on the other side.

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

692 (3) The motion to call for the previous question, which is itself non-debatable, is not in order
693 without opportunity having been given for at least two speeches for and two against the proposal.
694 Any delegate who moves the previous question (that is, that the vote be now taken on the
695 motion or motions pending) shall also indicate to what it is intended to apply, if any secondary
696 motion or motions are also pending. If said delegate does not so indicate, it shall be regarded
697 as applying only to the immediately pending question. This motion shall be taken without
698 debate and shall require a two-thirds vote of those present and voting for its adoption. If it
699 is adopted, the vote shall be taken on the motion or motions to which it applies without
700 further debate (See Rule 23). After three speeches for and three against and provided no
701 secondary motions come before the floor, the questions shall be put automatically. However,
702 the chairperson and/or duly authorized delegate or delegates presenting the committee's
703 report, and if there is a minority report, the presenter shall be entitled to speak before the
704 vote is taken (See Rule 29). These speeches shall be limited to three (3) minutes (See Rule 9).

705

706 *Rule 8. Interrupting the Speaker*

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

710

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

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

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

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

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

720

721 *Rule 10. Point of Order*

722 A delegate wishing to raise a point of order shall use the tablet at the table to register and
723 make a request to speak. The presiding bishop shall choose from the requests, interrupt the
724 proceedings, and direct the speaker to the appropriate microphone. In the event of tablet failure,
725 a delegate wishing to raise a point of order shall address the presiding officer and say, "I rise to
726 a point of order." The presiding officer shall interrupt the proceeding. If a delegate is speaking,
727 that one shall immediately yield the floor. The presiding officer shall then direct the
728 delegate raising the point of order to first cite the rule involved and then state the point
729 as briefly and concisely as possible. The delegate shall not presume to decide the question
730 or argue the point. A point of order is decided by the presiding officer without debate
731 unless in doubtful cases the presiding officer submits the question to the body for
732 advice or decision. When the presiding officer rules on a point, debate is closed,
733 but the decision may be appealed (See Rule 3).

734

735 *Rule 11. Bar of the Conference*

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

739

740 *Rule 12. Distracting Behavior*

741 A spirit of Christian conferencing is expected. Delegates are not to distract others.
742 Audible cell-phone use is not permitted in the plenary hall or the legislative committee rooms.
743 All electronic devices shall be muted or turned off. In addition, the use of
744 electronic devices should be in a manner that does not disturb other participants.
745 Respect should be shown in the use of social media at all times. Verbal and non-verbal
746 distractions are prohibited. The presiding officer or members of the General Conference
747 staff may ask individuals to leave the plenary hall or the legislative committee room if they
748 persist in behavior that interferes with the participation of other delegates.

749

750 *Rule 13. Electronic Recording*

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

754

755 *Rule 14. Right to Make Motions*

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

758

759 *Rule 15. Plenary Voting Procedure*

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

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

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

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

771

772 *Rule 16. Elections*

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

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

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

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

- 779 (3) Every name receiving a vote has been properly nominated according to the provisions.
780 (4) No more than one vote is cast for the same nominee.
781 (5) No vote is cast for a person who has already been elected.

782

783 *Rule 17. Division of Question*

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

788

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

790 *Rule 18. Distracting Behavior*

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

800

801 *Rule 19. Electronic Recording*

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

805

806 **V. Business Procedure**

807

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

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

812

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

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

817

818 *Rule 22. Alterations of Motions*

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

823

824 *Rule 23. Non-Debatable Motions*

825 The following motions shall be acted upon without debate:

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

827 (2) To suspend the rules.

828 (3) To lay on the table.

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

832 (4) To take from the table.

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

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

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

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

837

838 *Rule 24. Rights of the Main Question*

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

843

844 *Rule 25. Precedence of Secondary Motions*

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

- 848 (1) To fix the time the conference shall adjourn (This motion is subject to amendment, or it may
849 be laid on the table.);
- 850 (2) To adjourn;
- 851 (3) To take a recess;
- 852 (4) To lay on the table;
- 853 (5) To order the previous question (See Rules 23.5, 28);
- 854 (6) To limit or extend the limits of debate;
- 855 (7) To postpone to a given time;
- 856 (8) To refer;
- 857 (9) To amend or to amend by substitution (one amendment being allowed to an amendment);
- 858 (10) To postpone indefinitely.

859

860 *Rule 26. Motion to Adjourn*

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

- 863 (1) When a delegate has the floor;
- 864 (2) When a question is actually put or a vote is being taken and before it is finally decided;
- 865 (3) When the previous question has been ordered and action is pending;

866 (4) When a motion to adjourn has been lost and no business or debate has intervened;

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

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

869

870 *Rule 27. Final Adjournment*

871 At final adjournment all unfinished business shall remain unfinished.

872

873 *Rule 28. Procedure for Amending by Substitution*

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

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

882 (3) Following the debate on the motion to substitute, a vote on substitution will occur.
883 If the motion to substitute prevails by majority vote, the substitute motion
884 becomes the main motion. If the motion to substitute fails to receive a majority vote, the original
885 main motion remains on the floor for consideration. Debate including the offering of
886 amendments moves forward on the main motion as per the rules of procedure.

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

889

890 *Rule 29. Minority Report*

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

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

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

901 (3) A minority report shall be presented as a substitute for the report of the committee,
902 in conformity with Rule 28 and Rule 36 respectively, and it shall be managed
903 in the plenary according to Rule 28 for substitute motions. The signers of the minority
904 report shall select one of their signers to present the report as a substitute motion. In
905 closing debate on the motion to substitute, the delegate presenting the minority report
906 shall speak first and the presenter of the committee report shall be last.

907 (4) If the motion to substitute the minority report for the majority report prevails by majority
908 vote of the plenary, the minority report becomes the main motion. If the motion to substitute
909 fails to prevail by a majority vote of the plenary, the majority report of the committee
910 remains on the floor as the main motion for consideration. Debate including the offering of
911 amendments moves forward on the main motion as per the rules of procedure.

912

913 *Rule 30. Unlawful Motion After Speech*

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

916

917 *Rule 31. Exceptions to Majority Vote*

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

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

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

923 (3) A non-delegate may be invited to a full legislative committee or sub-committee

924 either by invitation of the chair or by one-third (1/3) vote of either body to speak
925 for no more than three (3) minutes on any one matter.
926 (4) One-third of those present and voting shall suffice to sustain a call for a recorded vote
927 in case the decision of the presiding officer is challenged (See Rule 15.2).
928 (5) A tie vote sustains the presiding officer (Rule 3.1).
929 (6) A two-thirds vote shall be required to sustain a motion to suspend (Rule 41)
930 or amend (Rule 42) the rules; to set aside a special order (Rule 33.1); to consider
931 a special order before the time set therefore; to sustain the request of the Committee
932 on Courtesies and Privileges for the presentation of any person after the sixth day of
933 the General Conference (See Section VII.A.3).
934 (7) A two-thirds vote shall be required to sustain a call for the previous question.
935 (8) A two-thirds vote shall be required to approve a proposal for a constitutional
936 amendment (*Book of Discipline* ¶¶ 59-61).

937
938 *Rule 32. Reconsideration*

939 A motion to reconsider an action of the body shall be in order at any time if offered by
940 a delegate who voted with the prevailing side. If the motion proposed for reconsideration was
941 non-debatable, the motion to reconsider shall be non-debatable (See Rule 23).

942
943 *Rule 33. Regular Calendar and Consent Calendar*

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

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

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

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

- 953 (b) The item has been previously published in the *Daily Christian Advocate*;
- 954 (c) The item has been in the hands of delegates for at least 24 hours;
- 955 (d) The item is neither a constitutional amendment nor one having financial implications; and
- 956 (e) No minority report is attached (See Rule 29).
- 957 (4) The *Daily Christian Advocate* shall clearly identify the Consent Calendar, which
- 958 will list items in three sections sub-headed as follows:
- 959 (a) Disciplinary Items Recommended for Adoption.
- 960 (b) Non-Disciplinary Items Recommended for Adoption.
- 961 (c) Items Recommended for Referral.
- 962 (5) The Consent Calendar shall be called up daily pursuant to Rule 2. Adoption of
- 963 the Consent Calendar by vote of the Conference shall be deemed action on all
- 964 calendar items on the Consent Calendar.
- 965 (6) If an error in assignment of a Consent Calendar item is discovered and reported by the
- 966 legislative chair to the Coordinator of the Calendar, the Coordinator of the Calendar shall
- 967 have the authority to report the error to the plenary session for reconsideration.
- 968 (7) Any 20 delegates may have a Consent Calendar item removed by having such
- 969 a request on file with the Secretary of the General Conference by 3:00 P.M. of the day
- 970 the calendar item first appears in the *Daily Christian Advocate*. Reserve delegates may sign
- 971 requests to remove item from the Consent Calendar only while seated as voting delegates.
- 972 Such items shall be called up in the regular order of business.
- 973 (8) Items lifted from the Consent Calendar may not be returned to the Consent Calendar.

974

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

- 976 (1) In addition to calendar items to be presented to the plenary, each legislative
- 977 committee shall report all items not presented in the following categories:
- 978 (a) Petitions not acted upon because another petition dealing with the same subject
- 979 was acted upon.
- 980 (b) Petitions not supported by the legislative committee. The committee shall report
- 981 the vote of the committee.

982 (c) Petitions assigned to but not considered by the legislative committee.
983 (2) These reports shall be printed in the *Daily Christian Advocate*.
984 (3) Any 20 delegates may have an item in (1)(b) or (1)(c) above presented to the plenary by
985 having such a request on file with the Secretary of the General Conference by 3:00 P.M.
986 of the day the item first appears in the *Daily Christian Advocate*. Reserve delegates
987
988 may sign requests to present an item in (1)(b) or (1)(c) above only while seated as
989 voting delegates. Such items shall be called up in the regular order of business while the
990 chair of the relevant committee is on the platform. Those supporting consideration of said
991 items shall select one of their number to present the item to the plenary.

992

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

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

996

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

998 (1) Following orientation of officers, committee leadership, utilizing the resources of
999 its petitions coordinator, shall evaluate the petitions assigned to the committee,
1000 establish priorities, and outline the committee's work on the basis of those priorities unless
1001 it is given special instructions by the General Conference (See Section VII.A.(7)(a)).

1002 (2) A legislative sub-committee chair shall ensure that all votes taken within a
1003 sub-committee are recorded and reported to the legislative committee plenary
1004 on the forms provided by the Secretary of the General Conference.

1005 (3) When a petition or resolution or any similar item is referred to one of the
1006 legislative committees, it shall be understood that the whole question with
1007 which the item has to do is referred to that committee for such action as it may
1008 deem wise. Every matter supported by the legislative committee shall be reported
1009 to the plenary with a motion to adopt or a motion to refer to a board, council,
1010 commission, or committee either for action or for report to the next General Conference.

1011 (4) Committees shall report to the Conference upon all matters referred to them by the
1012 Conference, directly or through the Committee on Reference. Committee reports on resolutions,
1013 petitions, etc., shall cite the same, identifying them by numbers they bear respectively in the
1014 published reports of the Committee on Reference or in some other suitable manner.

1015 (5) When a committee ascertains that another committee is, or in its judgment should be,
1016 considering a subject that the former is considering, it shall report the matter to
1017 the Committee on Reference for such adjustment as the situation may require.

1018 (6) The chairperson of each legislative committee shall coordinate the report of
1019 the committee to the plenary.

1020 (7) When the chairperson of a committee is not in agreement with a report adopted
1021 by the committee, it shall be the chairperson's duty to state the fact to the committee. The
1022 committee shall elect one of its members for the presentation and discussion of the report in the
1023 plenary. If, in such a case, the committee shall fail to select a representative, the chairperson
1024 shall designate a member to represent the committee, and said representative shall have
1025 all the rights and privileges of the chairperson in relation to such a report.

1026

1027 *Rule 37. Unfinished Business in Legislative Committee*

1028 Any legislation not acted upon by the legislative committee at the time of the
1029 Saturday evening adjournment of the first week of General Conference shall remain
1030 unfinished (See Rule 1.6 & See Section VII.G.3(d)).

1031

1032 *Rule 38. Legislative Committee Report to the Daily Christian Advocate*

1033 (1) As quickly as material can be prepared, each secretary of a legislative committee shall
1034 present each of the committee's reports to a recorder assigned to the committee.

1035 The recorder will prepare the report and the report will be approved and signed by
1036 the chair, vice-chair and secretary. After the report has been approved, it will be
1037 electronically transmitted to the Coordinator of the Calendar. A calendar number
1038 will be assigned and it will be published as approved.

1039 (2) Committee and minority reports that propose changes in the *Book of Discipline* shall give

1040 the paragraph number to be affected and shall be prepared in the following manner: Existing
1041 words used as reference points shall be in quotation marks; words to be deleted shall be
1042 in strike through; words to be added shall be bolded. In the publication of these reports,
1043 the *Daily Christian Advocate* will use the same convention (See Rule 40).

1044

1045 *Rule 39. Published Reports in Possession of Conference*

1046 Reports submitted by the committee according to the deadline, as announced by the Secretary
1047 of the General Conference, shall appear in the next day's *Daily Christian Advocate*. The
1048 report as published in the *Daily Christian Advocate* is the official copy, subject only to grammatical
1049 or other obvious editorial changes and shall be regarded as in the possession of the Conference.

1050 On the day following its first appearance in the *Daily Christian Advocate* or any time
1051 thereafter, a report is in order for consideration at the pleasure of the conference. The same
1052 rule shall apply to a minority report from any committee (See Rules 22, 29).

1053

1054 *Rule 40. Preparation and Publishing of Reports*

1055 (1) All committee reports shall be prepared using the approved General Conference Legislative
1056 System.

1057 (2) The report to the Coordinator of the Calendar for items voted in committee shall include the
1058 name of the committee, its total membership, the number present at the time the item was
1059 adopted, and the number voting for and against the item.

1060 (3) Reports of the legislative committees shall be published in the *Daily Christian Advocate* at
1061 least one day before being presented for consideration by the Conference. Committee reports
1062 with minority reports shall be published in sequence, and so numbered.

1063 (4) Every effort should be made by the secretary of the legislative committee to report
1064 consecutively all petitions that address the same issue.

1065

1066 **VI. Suspending, Amending, and Supplementing**

1067

1068 *Rule 41. Suspension of the Rules*

1069 The operation of any of the provisions of the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order may be
1070 suspended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the Conference (See Rule 31.6).

1071

1072 *Rule 42. Amending Rules*

1073 The Plan of Organization and Rules of Order may be amended or changed by a two-thirds
1074 vote of the Conference; provided the proposed change or amendment has originated in
1075 the Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order or has been presented to
1076 the Conference in writing and referred to this committee, which committee shall report
1077 thereon not later than the following day (See Rule 31.6).

1078

1079 The Plan of Organization and Rules of Order as adopted at the opening session shall be
1080 published in the next *Daily Christian Advocate*.

1081

1082 *Rule 43. Robert's Rules of Order, Supplemental Authority*

1083 In any parliamentary situation not covered by the Plan of Organization and Rules
1084 of Order, the General Conference shall be governed in its action by the current edition
1085 of *Robert's Rules of Order*.