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

PREAMBLE

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

The purpose of the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order is to help the General Conference discern God’s will and strive for Christ-like wisdom in all of our decisions, in the midst of theological and spiritual tension and to focus on God’s will for us amid the conflicting issues of the day. The General Conference must be open to discern prayerfully God’s will for us. There will be times, in the midst of deliberation, when we will need to stop. In the midst of deliberation, we may pause, listen in silence, pray together, and refocus our common vision on where the Spirit is leading the Church.
These times of silence, prayer, and discernment may be varied and surprising. While they are not substitutes for respectful and orderly debate, they do serve to hold our temporal affairs up to the light of the larger, common mission of The United Methodist Church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Trusting that God is at work throughout all of life, creation, the church invites the public the General Conference invites the Church and others to observe its our deliberations by conducting its our business in open meetings (consistent with ¶ 721 of the Book of Discipline).”

PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

I. Opening Session and Organization

The General Conference will assemble at the set time and place beginning with worship, on the day fixed at the place designated in accordance with the action taken by the preceding General Conference or the Commission on the General Conference. Holy Communion and the Memorial Service shall be celebrated by the Conference, led by the Council of Bishops. During the Memorial Service, the names of the bishops, and bishops’ spouses who have died since the adjournment of the preceding General Conference, and the names of the delegates-elect who have died shall be called. The opening business session of the Conference shall be on the day at the hour fixed by the Commission on the General Conference and 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 delegation for its membership. (See Rule 5), and
5) The chairperson of each delegation for Affiliated Autonomous Methodist and United Churches delegations.

B. Establish the bar of the conference.


1) Adoption of The Plan of Organization and Rules of Order

E. Elections

1) Coordinator of Calendar (See IV.C)

F. Report of Committee on Agenda.

G. Miscellaneous Business.

H. Adjournment.

II. Episcopal, Laity, and Young People Addresses

The Quadrennial Addresses shall be delivered early in the Conference, at such hour as determined by the Commission on the General Conference. The Council of Bishops shall coordinate the preparation and presentation of the Quadrennial Episcopal Address. The
Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders shall coordinate the preparation and presentation of the Quadrennial Lay Address from submissions by annual conference lay leaders. This opportunity shall be open to all annual conference lay leaders in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America. The United Methodist Division of Ministries with Young People shall coordinate the preparation and presentation of the Quadrennial Young People Address. This opportunity shall be open to all young people in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America.

III. Presiding Officers

The presiding officers for the several plenaries of the Conference, the opening plenary excepted (See Section I, above), shall be chosen from among the effective bishops by the Committee on Presiding Officers (See Section VIIA.6).

IV. Secretary of the General Conference

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

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

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

D. The Secretary of the General Conference shall appoint a Petitions Secretary who shall prepare the petitions, resolutions, and reports that meet the requirements of 

*Book of Discipline* ¶507 for reference to the appropriate legislative committee, subject to review by the Committee on Reference (See Section VII.A.7.). For a single petition signed by a number of people, the Secretary of the General Conference needs to print only the name of the first signer with an indication of the total number of signers. Petitions submitted by general agencies and/or conferences shall have all of those sources identified. Substantially identical petitions received from other sources shall be identified by number of petitions received.

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

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

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

Disciplinary provisions shall govern the nomination and election procedures for:

- General Council on Finance and Administration (¶805.1)
- General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (¶1502.1)
- General Commission on Archives and History (¶1704.2)
- The University Senate (¶1414.2)
- The Judicial Council (¶2602, 2603, 2604.1)

and Episcopal membership on:

- General Board of Church and Society (¶705.5d)
- General Board of Discipleship (¶705.5d)
- General Board of Global Ministries (¶705.5d, 1311.6)
- General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (¶705.5d)
The Daily Christian Advocate shall publish the list of nominees for election to the Judicial Council and the University Senate. Biographical sketches not to exceed 100 words in length shall be submitted by each nominee and shall be published as submitted.

VI. Commission on the General Conference

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

composed of twenty-five (25) members as follows: two persons from each jurisdiction, one person from the central conferences of each continent of Africa, Asia, and Europe, one young adult, the chairperson of the host committee, and ten (10) additional members. The additional members shall be allocated to reflect the proportionate jurisdictional membership based upon combined clergy and lay membership of the church. With the exception of the chairperson of the host committee, members shall be nominated from the elected delegates to the General Conference by the Council of Bishops at its fall meeting preceding General Conference and elected by the General Conference for a term of eight years. The Commission shall be equally divided between clergy and lay membership to the extent possible. Approximately half of the Commission shall be elected by the General Conference each quadrennium. If vacancies occur, the Council of Bishops shall elect geographically appropriate successors to serve through the next session of the General Conference and then nominate for election by the General Conference persons to serve any remainder term. The Secretary of the General Conference, the Treasurer of the General Council on Finance and Administration, the Business Manager of the General Conference, and a bishop named by the Council of Bishops shall also be ex-officio members without vote. The Council of Bishops shall designate one of its members to convene and organize the Commission for the coming quadrennium before the adjournment of the General Conference.

At the organizational meeting, an executive team comprised of a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary shall be elected. The remaining members of the executive team shall be the chairperson of the host committee, the Bishop serving on the Commission, the Secretary of the General Conference, the Business Manager of the General Conference, and the chairperson and secretary elected by the Committee on the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order. The Commission shall organize a Committee on the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order from
within its membership. The composition of the committee shall be determined by
the Commission. The Committee shall be organized at the initial meeting of the
Commission following General Conference. It shall elect its own chairperson and
secretary, who will serve on the Commission’s executive team.

B. The first Commission on the General Conference to be elected shall have half its
members nominated from persons currently serving non-expiring terms from the
current Commission on the General Conference and Committee on the Plan of
Organization and Rules of Order. Persons nominated from both of these current
groups shall serve a term of four years, expiring at the adjournment of the
subsequent General Conference. The remaining members shall be new nominees
and shall serve for a full eight-year term. The members of the 2005-2008
Commission on the General Conference and the Committee on the Plan of
Organization and Rules of Order will continue to serve until the adjournment of
the 2008 General Conference.

C. This Commission shall determine the place and time (within such limits as may
be set up by the General Conference) of the next General Conference and shall
send an official notice to all elected delegates announcing specifically the opening
day and hour of the General Conference and anticipated time of adjournment. It
shall further advise the General Conference delegates in advance of all such
special events and orders of the day, the dates and times of which have been
determined prior to the opening of the General Conference, in order that the
delegates may have an overview of the General Conference program. The
Commission shall make all necessary arrangements, including arrangements for
the publication of the *Daily Christian Advocate* and quadrennial reports of the
Connectional Table and the general agencies of the church, to be published by the
United Methodist Publishing House.

The *Daily Christian Advocate* shall print the list of nominees for election to
the Judicial Council and the University Senate. Biographical sketches not to
exceed 100 words in length shall be submitted for each nominee and shall be
printed as submitted for each nominee.

D. Duties of the Committee on the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order

1. The Commission shall refer to this committee any proposed amendments to
the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order (See Rule 39). Any other matters
relating to parliamentary order or procedure in the business of the General
Conference may be referred to this committee.

2. The Committee shall study the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order and
make needed changes and adaptations to be presented to the entire
Commission on General Conference for final approval. After printing in the
*Advance Daily Christian Advocate*, the Commission shall present the Plan of
Organization and Rules of Order to the General Conference for consideration
and final action, same to be published in the *Daily Christian Advocate* which
serves as the Journal of the General Conference.

be those published in the Journal of the preceding General Conference until
they have been altered or modified by action of the General Conference (*Book
of Discipline* ¶ 505).
E-B. The Commission shall take the necessary measures to assure full participation of all General Conference delegates including but not limited to providing accommodation for language and physical challenges, and access to approved licensed childcare during the session at or near the site of the General Conference for children of elected General Conference delegates.

1. Languages of the General Conference: The Advance Daily Christian Advocate will be printed published in English, French, and Portuguese. The Daily Christian Advocate will be published in English. Simultaneous and/or one-on-one interpretation of plenary and legislative committee sessions will be offered in French, Portuguese, Spanish, Swahili, German, Russian, Korean, and American Sign Language based upon delegate’s need and/or others as determined by the Commission on the General Conference in consultation with the Multilingual Resources of the General Board of Global Ministries.

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

F. The Commission shall plan the schedule for the opening day of the Conference.
G. The Commission shall recommend to the General Conference the per diem allowance to be paid to the elected delegates (See Section IX).
H. The Secretary of the General Conference, on behalf of the Commission on the General Conference, shall issue invitations to ecumenical representatives after consultation with the Council of Bishops and the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. The Commission shall arrange for local hospitality and presentation of ecumenical representatives to the General Conference.
I. The Commission is authorized to select the site of the General Conference up to four quadrennia in advance.
The General Secretary of the General Council on Finance and Administration shall confer with the Commission on the General Conference through its chairperson concerning the selection and performance review of the Business Manager of the General Conference.

VII. Committees

The General Conference shall have the standing committees and special committees as it may order herein after indicated, with such functions, responsibilities, and limitations as assigned, respectively as are herein after prescribed, and such special committees as it may order.

A. Administrative Committees

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

1) Agenda and Calendar

(a) There shall be a Committee on Agenda and Calendar composed of ten eleven members, at least five of whom shall be laypersons, to be
constituted as follows: one from each jurisdiction, one from the central
conferences of each of the continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe, the
Coordinator of the Calendar, and the chairperson or substitute for the
Chairperson of the Program Committee of the Commission on the General
Conference or designee, and the Chairperson of the Commission on
General Conference or designee. Beginning in 2016, there shall be a
Committee on Agenda and Calendar composed of fifteen members, one
from each central conference and jurisdiction, at least six of whom shall
be laypersons; the Coordinator of the Calendar; the Chairperson of the
Program Committee of the Commission on the General Conference or
designee; and the Chairperson of the Commission on the General
Conference or designee. No member of the committee shall be
chairperson of a legislative committee or a staff person of any general
agency. The Committee shall be convened, for the purpose of
organization, by the Secretary of the General Conference, or designee, at
least the day before the opening of the General Conference. Following the
presentation and adoption of the report of the Commission on the General
Conference at the opening session of the General Conference, the
Committee on Agenda and Calendar shall immediately become
responsible for guiding the order of business of the Conference.

(b) The Committee on Agenda and Calendar shall:

(1) Present calendar reports in such an order as to expedite the business of
(2) Inform the bishop presiding as soon as possible of the agenda items, including order of priority, to be considered,

(3) Keep an overview of calendar progress;

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

(5) Give priority in plenary for legislative consideration as calendar items become available; first to items affecting the global church, second to items with financial implications, and third to items with minority reports;

(6) Give priority to calendar items involving minority reports;

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

(87) Consult daily with the legislative committee chairpersons to expedite the business of the General Conference; and

(98) Receive all requests for special orders of the day, except those requested in the report of the Commission on the General Conference on the first day of the Conference.

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

2) Correlation and Editorial Revision

There shall be a Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision of four persons
and two alternates not delegates to the General Conference, and the Book Editor
or designee, who shall be an ex-officio member. They shall be entitled to
reimbursement of expenses for attendance at meetings of the committee. The
Book Editor or designee shall convene the committee for the purpose of
organization. The function of this committee shall be:

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

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

(c) To edit the Book of Discipline in accordance with Section X.B.
3) Courtesies and Privileges

There shall be a Committee on Courtesies and Privileges of eight members composed of one delegate from each jurisdiction and one delegate from a central conference from each of the continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe. Beginning in 2016, there shall be a Committee on Courtesies and Privileges composed of twelve members, one from each central conference and jurisdiction, at least six of whom shall be lay persons. The committee shall be convened by a bishop for the purpose of organization. The committee has the following duties and responsibilities:

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

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

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

(d) To limit its report, including the statement of the chairperson and the hearing of such persons as may be presented, to a maximum of ten minutes in any one business day. No person or persons shall be presented whose request has been denied by the Commission on the General
Conference, nor after the sixth day unless approved by a two-thirds vote of the Conference (See Rule 29.5).

4) **Credentials**

There shall be a Committee on Credentials of eight members, composed of one delegate from each jurisdiction and one delegate selected from a central conference from each of the continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe. **Beginning in 2016,** there shall be a Committee on Credentials composed of twelve members, one from each central conference and jurisdiction, at least six of whom shall be laypersons. The committee shall be convened by a bishop for the purpose of organization. The chairpersons of the respective annual conference delegations shall report to this committee on a form provided for that purpose any change in seating of delegates, indicating the length of time for which the change shall be effective. The chairperson of this committee shall make a daily written report to the Secretary of the General Conference, listing all changes of seating approved by the committee. If questions arise regarding the eligibility of seating any delegates, this committee shall report directly to the General Conference with its recommendations (See Rule 5). The committee shall provide guidance to the Secretary of the General Conference regarding the approval of credentials of delegates, and may review decisions regarding the seating of delegates, including reserve delegates. The committee shall report to the General Conference its decisions and recommendations regarding challenges to the seating of any delegates.
5) Journal

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

6) Presiding Officers

There shall be a Committee on Presiding Officers of sixteen members, composed
of one clergy and one lay delegate from each jurisdiction, and one clergy and one
lay delegate from central conferences from each of the continents of Africa, Asia,
and Europe. Beginning in 2016, there shall be a Committee on Presiding Officers
composed of twelve members, one from each central conference and jurisdiction,
six of whom shall be clergy and six of whom shall be laypersons. The Committee
shall be convened by a bishop for the purpose of organization. The Committee
shall select and notify the presiding officer(s) of each plenary session at least 24
hours in advance, insofar as possible. The Committee shall be free to select a
bishop for more than one session and to change the presiding officer during the
session, whenever it seems advisable (See Section III).

7) Reference

There shall be a Committee on Reference of sixteen members, composed of one
clergy and one lay delegate from each jurisdiction, and one clergy and one lay
delegate from a central conference from each of the continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe. Beginning in 2016, there shall be a Committee on Reference composed of twenty-four members, one clergy and one lay person from each central conference and jurisdiction. The membership of this Committee shall include at least one member from each legislative committee who will be designated as petition coordinator for their legislative committee. If possible, petition coordinators should have served previously on a General Conference legislative committee. These petition coordinators shall serve as advisors to the officers of the legislative committee of which they are members. Additional members from the Committee on Reference shall assist the petition coordinator in the legislative committee of which they are members. This committee shall be convened, for the purpose of organization, by the Secretary of the General Conference, or designee, the day prior to the opening of the General Conference.

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

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

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

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

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

B. Committee on Ethics

There shall be a Committee on Ethics, comprised of the members of the Committee of the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order of the General Conference. Individual delegates may report their concerns about alleged violations of the rules to the Secretary of the General Conference who shall investigate and attempt to resolve all such claims or, based on their severity, refer them to the Committee on Ethics.
Alleged violations of the rules may also be referred directly to the Committee on Ethics by a one-fifth vote of the Plenary. The Committee on Ethics shall review all matters referred to it and report its findings to the Plenary with recommended action.

**BC. Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters**

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

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

*Book of Discipline* paragraphs

- 28-31 Constitution: Central Conferences
- 428 Conference of Methodist Bishops
- 540-548 Central Conferences
- 560-567 Provisional Central Conferences
- 570-575 Autonomous Methodist, Affiliated Autonomous
  - Methodist, Affiliated United, Covenanting, and
  - Concordat Churches
- 2201 Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters

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

CD. Legislative Committees

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

The General Conference shall have the following legislative committees, which shall consider all proposals looking toward new legislation or changes in the present legislation of the Church, including all reports and recommendations from general agencies and special commissions or committees, and report recommendations relating thereto to the Conference. Any legislative committee considering legislation affecting the concerns of the Commission on Central Conference Affairs shall consult with the Commission before submitting its proposed legislation to the General Conference.

1) Church and Society

To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the work and concerns of the Board of Church and Society and the Social Principles with the exception of paragraphs 161 and 162 of the Book of Discipline.

Book of Discipline paragraphs

628..............................AC: Board of Church and Society
2) **Church and Society.**

To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to paragraphs 161 and 162 of the Social Principles in the *Book of Discipline*.

*Book of Discipline* paragraphs

161..........................The Nurturing Community
162..........................The Social Community

3) **Conferences.**

To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the composition and activities of the General, Jurisdictional, Annual, Provisional, Missionary, and District Conferences, and Missions, including the Jurisdictional, Annual and District Connectional Ministries or equivalent. (Legislation relative to Central Conferences shall be referred to the Commission on Central Conference Affairs (see *Book of Discipline* ¶ 2201).

*Book of Discipline* paragraphs

8-12..........................Constitution: Conferences
13-16..........................Constitution: General Conference
23-27..........................Constitution: Jurisdictional Conferences
32-36..........................Constitution: Annual Conferences
37-41..........................Constitution: Boundaries
42..........................Constitution: District Conferences
501-510.........................General Conference (including opening statement)
511-526.........................Jurisdictional Conference
527, 529.........................Jurisdictional Agencies
528..........................Jurisdictional Coordination of Programs
580-583.........................Provisional Annual Conferences
585-588.........................Missionary Conference
590-591.........................Mission
601-607, 609....................Annual Conference
652..........................AC: Committee on Disability Concerns
656-657.........................District Conference
659..........................District Program Organization

4) **Discipleship.**

To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the work and concerns of the Boards of Discipleship.

*Book of Discipline* paragraphs

267-270.........................LC: Lay Speaking Ministries
271..............................LC: Lay Missioner
531..............................Jurisdictional Youth Ministry Organization
532..............................Jurisdictional Young-Adult Organization
629..............................AC: Board of Discipleship
5) Faith and Order.

To this committee shall be referred all petitions relating to Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task, the Ministry of all Christians and the Meaning of Ordination and Conference Membership.

*Book of Discipline* paragraphs

101-104.................Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task
120-124.................The Churches
125-130.................The Ministry of All Christians
131-132.................Servant Ministry and Servant Leadership
133-135.................Servant Ministry
136-137.................Servant Leadership
138......................Called to Inclusiveness
139-141...............The Fulfillment of Ministry through the United Methodist Church
301-304.................The Meaning of Ordination and Conference Membership

6) Financial Administration.

To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the work and concerns of the Council on Finance and Administration, the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and the United Methodist Publishing House. The budget and recommendations prepared by the General Council on Finance and Administration shall be submitted to this committee for study and review. Thereafter, when the General Council on Finance and Administration presents its report to the General Conference for action, the committee shall present its recommendations and may propose amendments.

*Book of Discipline* paragraphs

7.........................Constitution: Title to Properties
22.........................Constitution: Restrictive Rule
7) **General Administration.**

To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the work and concerns of the Connectional Table. The report of the Connectional Table shall be submitted to this committee for study and review. Thereafter, when the Connectional Table presents its report to the General Conference for action, the committee shall present its recommendations and may propose amendments.

*Book of Discipline* paragraphs

1-4 Constitution: General (including Preamble)
17-19, 21 Constitution: Restrictive Rules
59-61 Constitution: Amendments
263-266 Local Church Special Sundays
701-724 Administrative Order General Provisions
901-907 Connectional Table
2406 JUSTPEACE

8) **Global Ministries.**

To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the work and concerns of the Boards of Global Ministries.

*Book of Discipline* paragraphs

534 JC: United Methodist Women
632 AC: Board of Global Ministries
646 AC: United Methodist Women
653 AC: Committee on Native American Ministry
654 AC: Advance Program
655 AC: Committee on Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries
667 DC: United Methodist Women
820-821 The Advance
1301-1311 General Board of Global Ministries
1312 GBGM: Mission Program Areas
1313-1316 GBGM: Office of Deaconess
9) Independent Commissions.
To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to commissions, and ecumenical concerns. This shall include Archives and History, Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, Communications, Religion and Race, Status and Role of Women, United Methodist Men, and membership or relationship to the World Methodist Council, Councils and Consultations of Churches, and the American Bible Society.

Book of Discipline paragraphs
5..........................Constitution: Racial Justice
6..........................Constitution: Ecumenical Relations
530..........................JC: Commission on Archives and History
535..........................JC: Committee on United Methodist Men
608..........................AC: Director of Communications
631..........................AC: Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns
640..........................AC: Commission on Archives and History
641..........................AC: Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns
642..........................AC: Commission on Religion and Race
643..........................AC: Commission on Status and Role of Women
644..........................AC: Commission on Small Membership Church
645..........................AC: Commission on Communications
647..........................AC: United Methodist Men
661..........................DC: Director Ethnic Local Church Concerns
662..........................DC: Director Religion and Race
668..........................DC: United Methodist Men
1701-1712..................General Commission on Archives and History
1801-1808..................General Commission on Communications
1901-1906..................General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns
2001-2008..................General Commission on Religion and Race
2101-2109..................General Commission on Status and Role of Women
2301-2303..................General Commission on United Methodist Men
2401-2405..................Ecumenical Organizations

10) Judicial Administration.
To this Committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the Judiciary, the Judicial Civil Administration review committee, and investigations, trials, and appeals.

Book of Discipline paragraphs
55-58..........................Constitution: The Judiciary
635..........................AC: Administrative Review Committee
2601-2612..................Judicial Council
2701-2719..................Investigations, Trials and Appeals
11) Local Church.
To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the organization of the local church and its membership, programs, boards, councils, commissions, committees, etc., or relating to local church property.

Book of Discipline paragraphs
43-44 .......................... Constitution: Charge Conferences
201-213 ...................... Local Church
214-242 .......................... LC: Church Membership
243-259 .......................... LC: Organization and Administration
260-262 .......................... LC: General
2524-2551 .......................... LC: Property

12) Ministry and Higher Education.
To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the work and concerns of Ordained Ministries, Higher Education, Schools of Theology, and the Division of Chaplaincy and Related Ministries.

Book of Discipline paragraphs
20 .......................... Constitution: Restrictive Rule
272 .......................... Certified Lay Minister
305-369 .......................... Ordained Ministry
533 .......................... JC: Committee on Ordained Ministries
633 .......................... AC: Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry
634 .......................... AC: Board of Ordained Ministry
663 .......................... DC: Committee on Ordained Ministry
1401-1409 .......................... General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
1410-1421 .......................... GBHEM: Division of Higher Education
1422-1423 .......................... GBHEM: Schools of Theology

13) Superintendency.
To this committee shall be referred all petitions, resolutions, etc., relating to the work and concerns of Superintendency.

Book of Discipline paragraphs
45-54 .......................... Constitution: Episcopal Supervision
401-404 .......................... Superintendency
405-416 .......................... Superintendency: Bishops
417-425 .......................... Superintendency: District Superintendent
426-427, 429 .......................... Expressions of Superintendency
430-435 .......................... Appointment-Making
636 .......................... AC: Committee on Episcopacy
666 .......................... DC: Committee on District Superintendency

DE. Membership of Legislative Committees.
1) Each delegate serves as a member of one of the legislative committees numbered one to thirteen. Within the annual conference delegation, each delegate shall choose from the one legislative committees, one to thirteen, the committee on which to serve, the choice being made in order of election.

Beginning with 2004 In 2012, the clergy first elected, shall be entitled to the first choice, the lay delegate first elected, the second choice, and thus the right of choice shall continue to alternate between clergy and lay delegates in the order of their election. For subsequent General Conferences, first choice shall alternate between the lay and clergy delegates, provided two members of a delegation may not serve on any one of the above-designated same legislative committees one to thirteen unless the said delegation is represented on each all of them. All delegations composed of 14 or more delegates shall assign all delegates in excess of 13 according to this same principle of distribution. (For example, a conference with 16 delegates shall have two delegates on each of any three of these 13 committees and one on each of the remaining 10. Similarly, a conference with 28 delegates shall have three delegates on each of two committees and two on each of the remaining 11. Each delegate may, in the order herein indicated, select any one of these 13 committees, provided the foregoing division of the delegates among the committees is maintained.) Whenever a delegation has more than one delegate on a legislative committee, its delegates shall be divided as equally as possible between lay and clergy. Thus, if there are three delegates on a committee, they shall be two clergy and
one lay or vice versa. The Secretary of the General Conference shall provide these instructions and examples with the election of delegate instructions sent to each annual conference secretary.

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

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

**EF. Meetings of Committees.**

1) Organization and Quorum of Committees. All legislative and administrative committees shall meet for organization at a time determined by the Commission on the General Conference. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business in all committees.
Consistent with the spirit of ¶721 in the Book of Discipline, meetings of General Conference committees and subcommittees shall be open.

2) Administrative Committees.

(a) A bishop appointed by the Committee on Presiding Officers—Council of Bishops and an organizing secretary appointed by the Secretary of the General Conference shall serve, respectively as chairperson and secretary, to organize an organization in each of the administrative committees, except where other provision is specified.

(b) The election of chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary of each administrative committee shall be by separate sequential written ballot for each position. Due consideration shall be given for inclusiveness that reflects the global nature of the church, including gender, age, ethnicity, geography, young people, clergy, and lay.

3) Legislative Committees. All legislative committees shall meet for organization at such time as the Commission on the General Conference shall determine. A bishop appointed by the Council of Bishops and an organizing secretary appointed by the Secretary of the General Conference shall serve, respectively, as chairperson and secretary, to organize an organization in each of the several committees. The first meeting of the legislative committees shall be held as soon as possible following the first plenary session of the General Conference. The orientation of the committee,
followed by the election of officers, shall be the order of business of the first meeting of the committee.

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

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

(c) Parliamentarians. Each legislative committee shall be assigned a parliamentarian by the Secretary of the General Conference. Retired Bishops nominated by the Council of Bishops shall be included in the pool of parliamentarians. It shall be the responsibility of the Business Manager of the General Conference to develop a pool of other people not currently
delegates to serve as parliamentarians. It is preferred that these persons be members of The United Methodist Church, have knowledge of the Rules of the General Conference, and have training in parliamentary procedure. The retired bishops shall be given priority in being assigned to legislative committees. At the invitation of the presiding officer, the parliamentarian advises on matters of parliamentary procedure. This legislation will take effect at the 2012 General Conference.

(d) Regular Meetings. The legislative committees 1 to 13 inclusive shall meet for business as scheduled by the Agenda and Calendar Committee unless otherwise ordered by the Conference, until their work is completed, and at such other times as the committees may determine provided that no legislative committee shall meet at times that conflict with plenary sessions. Any legislation not completed by the legislative committee at the time of the Saturday evening adjournment of the first week of General Conference shall remain unfinished and legislative committees shall be adjourned (See Rule 35).

(e) Sub-Committees. Legislative committees may divide into sub-committees as needed to facilitate their work. Sub-committee chairs shall be elected by ballot by the legislative committee plenary with due consideration to gender, age, ethnicity, geography, and clergy and lay.

(f) Voting Area. Each legislative committee and sub-committee shall establish an area in which only voting committee members and their properly credentialed assistant or translator will be seated. The Business
Manager of the General Conference shall provide four designated seats in each legislative committee chairs for the monitors from the General Commission on Religion and Race and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. An area shall also be established for those present with voice but not vote (See Section VII.E.2). Staff members of the Secretary of General Conference and Business Manager of General Conference may speak in the performance of their duties. General agency staff, other resource persons, and visitors may speak only when authorized, in each instance by specific committee action.

(gf) Minority Reports. Minority reports allow for the expression of differing views held by a significant portion of a legislative committee and may be offered in accordance with Rules 27, 36, and 37.

(hg) Priorities Reports. Whenever possible, legislative committees shall give first priority to legislation with financial implications. Legislative Committee Reports should be submitted as soon as possible following the action of the committee. All Legislative Committee Reports on such matters must shall be submitted prior to 5 p.m. on Monday of the second week to allow printing in the Tuesday edition of the Daily Christian Advocate.

**FG. Function and Authority of Committees.**

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

2) The legislative committees shall consider and report upon that which is referred to them by the Committee on Reference or which has been referred to them directly by the Conference (See Rule 34).

VIII. Proposal Involving Expenditure of Unbudgeted Funds

A. Any action proposed to the General Conference plenary to establish an interim or continuing board, commission, committee, or task force shall be referred to the General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table or their executive committees or their expenditure review group for a report and recommendation before final action is taken.

The General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table or their executive committees or their expenditure review group shall provide the General Conference with the following before action is taken:

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

2) a statement explaining how the creation of the proposed board, commission, committee, or task force will affect the budget or budgets for existing boards, commissions, committees and task forces already presented by the General Council on Finance and Administration.
B. Any action proposed to the General Conference plenary that involves the expenditure of funds shall be referred to the General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table or their executive committees or their expenditure review group for advice and recommendation before final action is taken. Any general agency requests for supplemental funds shall be identified as such; otherwise, they shall be considered as having been included within the agency budget.

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

IX. Delegates Expenses

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

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

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

D. For the dates General Conference is in session, no General Conference delegate shall
receive expense money from the general Church or any of its boards and agencies
other than approved per diem and travel expenses available to all delegates. This
provision is not to restrict official assistance to delegates from their own annual
conferences.
X. Material to be Included in *The Book of Discipline*

A. Non-legislative material (Pages 1-20, 2008 *The Book of Discipline*) shall be referred to the Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision for consideration and possible consultation with the General Commission on Archives and History or referral to the Committee on Reference, recommendation to the General Conference for further consideration and final action before being printed in the *Book of Discipline*.

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

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

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

XI. Distribution to the Desks of Delegates of Materials within the Bar of the Conference

After the first day, only the Daily Christian Advocate shall be placed on the desks of the delegates, with additional copies for the first clergy and first lay reserve delegate from each delegation. Pages will facilitate personal communication with seated participants under the following conditions: (1) The communication is handwritten; and (2) The communication bears the name and location of both the recipient and the sender. Multiple copies of duplicated material will be distributed to delegates at their desks only when requested by an
official body of the General Conference and approved by the Office of the Secretary of the
General Conference.

Pages will distribute communications to individual delegates provided the communication
bears the name and location of both the recipient and the sender.

Materials related to General Conference presentations and produced by official bodies of
The United Methodist Church shall be approved by the Secretary of the General Conference
prior to distribution by the pages.

XII. Distribution of Unofficial Materials Outside of the Plenary or Committee Room

Daily, periodic, or regular Newsletters, or any special interest material from published at
General Conference by United Methodist boards, agencies, and related United Methodist
groups may be distributed under the following conditions:

A. One copy Two copies of each item publication shall be submitted to deposited in the
office of the Commission on the General Conference in advance of the time of
distribution.

B. Material distributed shall be relevant to should be used for information relative to
matters that have been before or are coming before the General Conference and not
for soliciting membership in an organization.
C. Distribution method shall be at least 30 feet outside any entrance door to the plenary or committee meeting room.

D. Distribution shall be done by representatives of the above named publishing groups. Distributors shall be in the smallest number capable of effecting adequate distribution to those entering. During distribution, it is the responsibility of the distributors not to impede or interfere with the entrance or exit of persons or to hamper the general flow of pedestrian traffic.

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

F. Distributors violating these regulations will be prohibited from future distributions.

XIII. Reports to be Mailed Before General Conference

The reports, recommendations, and resolutions requiring action by the General Conference, as well as petitions submitted in accordance with the Book of Discipline ¶507.7, shall first be assigned a Petition Number by the Secretary of the General Conference or the Petitions Secretary and then shall be printed published in an Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate and distributed to all delegates and to the first clergy and first lay reserve delegates at least ninety days prior to the opening of the General Conference. Such Reports shall be printed published in the same size and style as the Daily Christian Advocate and be punched for binding. In order to accomplish this,
the finished copy of all such reports and recommendations shall be submitted to the editor of the *Daily Christian Advocate* at least 210 days prior to the opening of the General Conference. Reports and recommendations not printed in an Advance Edition of the *Daily Christian Advocate* may be received by the General Conference only upon three-fourths vote of the General Conference. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall be exempt from this requirement to the extent necessary to allow inclusion of general funds receipts information for the first three years of the quadrennium. The General Council on Finance and Administration will provide data including the third year of the quadrennium and other appropriate information to delegates prior to the convening of the General Conference.

**RULES OF ORDER**

**I. Daily Schedule**

*Rule 1. Hours of Meetings*

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

1. **8:00 a.m.** Choral music *Morning Praise and Prayer*
2. **8:15 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.** Devotional service under the direction of the Council of Bishops
3. **8:20 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** Conference business or committee meetings
4. **1:30 or 2:30 p.m.** (as specified by the daily schedule) to 5:00 p.m. Conference business or committee meetings
7:30 p.m. Conference business. Evening programs as planned by the Commission on the General Conference, Conference business or committee meetings and worship under the direction of the Council of Bishops. During a Memorial Service, the names of the bishops, bishops’ spouses, and delegates-elect who have died since the adjournment of the previous General Conference shall be called.

(6) Recess may be called during any plenary session at a time deemed appropriate by the presiding officer.

(6) Daily adjournment shall be called by 9:30 p.m. each evening.

Rule 2. Order of Business

After the devotional service, the daily sessions of the Conference shall be conducted as follows:

(1) Reports of administrative and special committees
(2) Agenda and calendar items
(3) Consent calendar (See Rule 31.5)
(4) Miscellaneous business

II. Presiding Officers

Rule 3. Authority of the Presiding Officer

(1) The presiding officer of their respective body (plenary, administrative committees, legislative committees, and sub-committees) shall decide and rule on
points of order, raised by the delegates and shall rule on points of order not raised by delegates, as the presiding officer deems necessary to conform to these rules of order, subject in both cases to an appeal to the body by any delegate. A delegate may appeal the ruling to the body without debate, except that the presiding officer and the appellant, in the order here named, shall each have three minutes for a statement in support of their respective positions. A tie vote in the case of appeal shall sustain the presiding officer (See Rule 29.4). Any delegate who raises a point of order shall cite the rule believed to have been violated.

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

(3) The presiding officer shall have the right to recess a session of the body at any time at the presiding officer’s discretion and to reconvene at such time as the presiding officer shall announce propose. Consistent with the spirit of ¶721 of the Book of Discipline, in rare circumstances the presiding officer shall also have the right to stipulate that the session shall reconvene in closed session with only delegates, authorized personnel, and authorized guests permitted to attend such a session following recess (See Section VII.F.1.).

Rule 4. Calling the Conference to Order

When the presiding officer calls the body to order, no delegate shall speak, address the chair, or stand.
III. Rights and Duties of Delegates

Rule 5. Attendance and Seating Reserves

The chairperson of each delegation shall be provided with a form on which to report daily the attendance of its delegates. Any reserve seated in the place of a regular delegate shall have been duly elected as a reserve delegate by the Annual Conference and shall meet the requirements set forth in the Book of Discipline ¶34-36. Delegates, including reserves when the latter are substituted for a delegate or delegates, shall be seated in the order of their election, except when a reserve is seated temporarily or in case of special need as determined by the delegation chairperson. The reserve shall occupy the seat of the delegate for whom the substitution is made. Reserves shall not be seated for delegates presenting on the platform. All delegates arriving after the opening roll call shall be reported by the chairperson of the delegation to the secretary of the General Conference or designee. Committee on Credentials (See section VII.A.4. See also Book of Discipline ¶506 defining a Quorum.) No delegate, unless hindered by sickness or other emergency, shall be absent from the sessions of the Conference without permission of the Conference. All absences shall be reported by the chairpersons of the delegations to the secretary of the General Conference or designee Committee on Credentials on a form provided for this purpose. Reserve delegates are to function within the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference (See Rules 27 and 31). A reserve delegate may be seated upon authority of the chairperson of the delegation who shall report the
substitution in writing to the secretary of the General Conference or designee Committee on Credentials on a form provided for this purpose. Reserves are chosen to be seated:

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

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

If the substitution is challenged, the Committee on Credentials disapproves the substitution, after consultation with the chairperson of the delegation, it may report its recommendation to the General Conference. The chairperson of the Committee on Credentials shall make a daily written report to the Secretary of the General Conference, listing all changes of seating (See Section IA.4 and VII.A.4).

Rule 6. Directions for Securing the Plenary Floor

A delegate desiring to speak to the Conference shall hold up the appropriate placard to be recognized by the bishop presiding. Unless raising a point of order or parliamentary inquiry, the delegate shall not speak until given the floor. The bishop presiding shall consider the various sections of the auditorium in rotation. The delegate recognized shall proceed to the nearest microphone and shall first announce her or his name and the name of the conference represented, which in turn the bishop presiding shall then announce to the Conference. A delegate recognized by the presiding bishop may not yield the floor to another delegate.

Rule 7. Plenary Speakers For and Against

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

(2) Except for non-debatable motions (Rule 21), no report shall be adopted or
question relating to the same decided, without opportunity having been given for
at least two speeches for and two against the said proposal.

(3) The motion to call for the previous question, which is itself non-debatable, is not
in order without opportunity having been given for until there have been at least
two speeches for and two against the proposal. Any delegate who moves the
previous question (that is, that the vote be now taken on the motion or motions
pending) shall also indicate to what it is intended to apply, if any secondary
motion or motions are also pending. If said delegate does not so indicate, it shall
be regarded as applying only to the immediately pending question. This motion
shall be taken without debate and shall require a two-thirds vote of those present
and voting for its adoption. If it is adopted, the vote shall be taken on the motion
or motions to which it applies without further debate (See Rule 21). After three
speeches for and three against and provided no secondary motions come before
the floor, the questions shall be put automatically. However, the chairperson
and/or duly authorized delegate or delegates presenting the committee’s report,
and if there is a minority report, the presenter shall be entitled to speak before the
vote is taken (See Rule 27). These speeches shall be limited to three (3) minutes
(See Rule 9).
Rule 8. Interrupting the Speaker

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

Rule 9. Speaking More Than Once; Length of Speech

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

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

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

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

Rule 10. Point of Order

A delegate wishing to raise a point of order shall address the presiding officer and say, “I rise to a point of order.” The presiding officer shall interrupt the proceeding. If a delegate is speaking, that one shall immediately yield the floor. The presiding officer shall then direct the delegate raising the point of order to state the point as briefly and concisely as possible, citing the rule invoked in the point of order. The delegate shall not
presume to decide the question or argue the point. A point of order is decided by the
presiding officer without debate unless in doubtful cases the presiding officer submits the
question to the body for advice or decision. When the presiding officer rules on a point,
debate is closed, but the decision may be appealed (See Rule 3).

Rule 11. Bar of the Conference

The bar of the conference shall provide for the integrity of the General Conference. It is
for delegates, pages, and others who have been granted access to the area for General
Conference business as provided through the Rules or through the suspension of the
Rules. Delegates are not to distract others near them by engaging in unrelated business
activity.

Rule 12. Distracting Behavior

Delegates are not to distract others near them by engaging in activities unrelated to the
matters at hand. Audible cell-phone use is not permitted in the plenary hall or the
legislative committee rooms by delegates or observers while in session. All electronic
devices shall be muted or turned off. In addition, the use of laptop computers, personal
digital assistants, pagers and other electronic devices should be in furtherance of General
Conference business and done in such a manner that it does not disturb other participants.
The presiding officer or members of the General Conference staff may ask individuals to
leave the plenary hall or the legislative committee room if they persist in behavior that
interferes with the participation of other delegates. All electronic devices should have
audible alarms muted when possible.
Rule 13. Electronic Recording

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

Rule 14. Right to Make Motions

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

Rule 15. Plenary Voting Procedure

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

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

3. In the event the electronic voting system is inoperable and a count vote is called for, the chairpersons of the delegations shall poll their respective delegations or pages may serve as tellers.

4. Only delegates within the bar of the Conference when the vote is taken shall be entitled to vote. No delegate shall cast a vote in place of any other delegate.
No other business shall be in order when a vote is being taken or when the previous question has been called until the process is completed, except such as relates to the vote itself or such business as the presiding officer may deem appropriate.

Rule 16. Elections

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

A ballot is valid if it meets the following standards:

1. It is cast by a voting delegate or properly seated reserve delegate.
2. It contains votes for the same number of nominees, as there are vacancies to be filled.
3. Every name receiving a vote has been properly nominated according to the provisions.
4. No more than one vote is cast for the same nominee.
5. No vote is cast for a person who has already been elected.

Rule 17. Division of Question

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

Rule 18. Motion for Adoption of Legislative and Administrative Committee Reports

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

Rule 19. Required Forms for Reports, Resolutions, Motions, Amendments.

All resolutions and committee reports shall be prepared in accordance with instructions from the Secretary of the General Conference; and all motions, including amendments, shall be presented in writing (See Rules 31.2, 32.3, 34.2, 36).

Rule 20. Alterations of Motions

When a motion is made and seconded, a resolution is introduced and seconded, or a committee report is read or published in the Daily Christian Advocate, it shall be deemed to be in the possession of the Conference and may not be altered except by action of the Conference (See Rule 37).

Rule 21. Non-Debatable Motions

The following motions shall be acted upon without debate:

(1) To adjourn, when unqualified, except for final adjournment.
(2) To suspend the rules.

(3) To lay on the table.

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

(4) To take from the table

(5) To call for the previous questions, when in order (See Rules 7 and 22).

(6) To reconsider a non-debatable motion (See Rule 30)

(7) To limit or extend the limits of debate

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

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**Rule 22. Rights of the Main Question**

The main question may be opened to debate under the following motions: to adopt, to reject or refer, to substitute, to postpone, and or to reconsider. No new motion, resolution, or subject shall be entertained until the one under consideration shall have been disposed of except as provided in Rule 15.4.

This rule The foregoing does not apply to secondary motions if otherwise allowable.

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**Rule 23. Precedence of Secondary Motions**

If any one or more of the following motions shall be made when one or more other motions are pending, the order of their precedence in relation to one another shall be the same as the order of their listing below:
(1) To fix the time the conference shall adjourn (This motion is subject to
amendment, or it may be laid on the table.);

(2) To adjourn;

(3) To take a recess;

(4) To lay on the table;

(5) To order the previous question (See Rules 21.5, 26);

(6) To limit or extend the limits of debate;

(7) To postpone to a given time;

(8) To refer;

(9) To amend or to amend by substitution (one amendment being allowed to an
amendment);

(10) To postpone indefinitely.

Rule 24. Motion to Adjourn

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

(1) When a delegate has the floor;

(2) When a question is actually put or a vote is being taken and before it is finally
decided;

(3) When the previous question has been ordered and action thereunder is pending;

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

(5) When the motion to fix the time to which the Conference shall adjourn is pending.
This rule, the foregoing, does not apply to a motion for final adjournment of the Conference.

Rule 25. Final adjournment

At final adjournment shall be *sine die*; therefore, all unfinished business shall remain unfinished.

Rule 26. Procedure for Amending by Substitution

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

(2) Debate on the motion to substitute will be limited to the question of substitution only. No amendments to the main motion or the substitute will be considered during this period of initial consideration. The Conference shall proceed first to perfect the original report or resolution, including consideration and action upon any amendments that may be offered to it.

(3) Following the debate on the motion to substitute, a vote on substitution will occur. If the motion to substitute prevails by majority vote, the substitute motion becomes the main motion. If the motion to substitute fails to receive a majority vote, the original main motion remains on the floor for consideration. Debate,
including the offering of amendments, moves forward on the main motion as per the rules of procedure. The same perfecting process shall be followed with respect to the substitute.

(4) The questions shall be put first on the motion to substitute, followed by the motion to adopt the report or resolution.

(5) The motion for the previous questions shall not be in order on the motion to substitute adoption of the report or recommendation or on making the proposed substitution until opportunity has been given for at least two speakers on each side of the question of substitution or adoption (See Rule 27 for handling minority reports).

Rule 27. Minority Report

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

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

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

(3) A minority report shall be presented as a substitute for the report of the
committee, in conformity with Rule 26 and Rule 34 respectively, and it shall be
managed in the plenary according to Rule 26 for substitute motions. Indicate the
report number to which it relates. The signers of the minority report shall select
one of their number to present the report as a substitute motion. This person shall
have the same rights and privileges as the presenter of the committee report. In
closing debate on the minority report motion to substitute, the delegate presenting
the minority report shall speak first and the presenter of the committee report shall
be last.

(4) If the motion to substitute the minority report for the majority report prevails by
majority vote of the plenary, the minority report becomes the main motion. If the
motion to substitute fails to prevail by a majority vote of the plenary, the majority
report of the committee remains on the floor as the main motion for consideration.

Rule 28. Unlawful Motion After Speech

After making a speech on a pending question, a delegate may not make a motion that
would limit or stop debate without first relinquishing the floor.
It shall not be in order for a delegate immediately after discussing a pending question and before relinquishing the floor to make a motion, which if adopted, would limit or stop debate.

Rule 29. Exceptions to Majority Vote

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

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

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

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

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

45. A two-thirds vote shall be required to sustain a motion to suspend (Rule 39) or amend (Rule 40) the rules; to set aside a special order (Rule 31.1); to consider a special order before the time set therefore; to sustain the request of the Committee on Courtesies and Privileges for the presentation of any person after the sixth day of the General Conference (See Section VII.A.3).

56. A two-thirds vote shall be required to sustain a call for the previous question.

67. A two-thirds vote shall be required to approve a proposal for a constitutional amendment (Book of Discipline ¶59-61).
**Rule 30. Reconsideration**

A motion to reconsider an action of the body shall be in order at any time if offered by a delegate who voted with the prevailing side. If the motion proposed for reconsideration was non-debatable, the motion to reconsider shall be non-debatable (See Rule 21).

**Rule 31. Regular Calendar and Consent Calendar**

1. The Secretary of the General Conference shall keep the Calendar which includes the orders of the day and the reports of committees (See Rule 37). Business placed on the calendar shall be considered in the order recommended by the Committee on Agenda and Calendar, unless by two-thirds vote of the Conference, an item is taken up out of order (See Rule 29.5).

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

3. Action from a legislative committee shall be placed on the Consent Calendar if:
   - No more than ten votes were cast against the prevailing position in the committee;
   - The item has been previously printed in the *Daily Christian Advocate*;
   - The item has been in the hands of delegates for at least 24 hours;
   - The item is neither a constitutional amendment nor one having financial implications; and
(e) No minority report is attached (See Rule 27).

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

(a) Disciplinary Items Recommended for Adoption.

(b) Non-Disciplinary Items Recommended for Adoption.

(c) Items Recommended for Rejection.

(d) Items Recommended for Referral.

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

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

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

(8) Items lifted from the Consent Calendar may not be returned to the Consent Calendar.
Rule 32. Report of Non-Calendar Items

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

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

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

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

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

(3) Any 20 delegates may have an item in (1)(b) or (1)(c) above presented to the plenary by having such a request on file with the Secretary of the General Conference by 3:00 p.m. of the day the item first appears in the Daily Christian Advocate. Reserve delegates may sign requests to present an item in (1)(b) or (2)(c) above only while seated as voting delegates. Such items shall be called up in the regular order of business while the chair of the relevant committee is on the platform. Those supporting consideration of said items shall select one of their number to present the item to the plenary.

Rule 33. Rules of Order of Legislative Committees

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

Rule 34. Duties and Prerogatives of Legislative Committees
(1) Following election and orientation of officers, as its first order of business, each committee shall utilize the resources of its petitions coordinator (see Committee on Reference). Committee leadership, utilizing the resources of its petitions coordinator, shall evaluate the petitions assigned to the committee, establish priorities, and outline the committee’s work on the basis of those priorities unless it is given special instructions by the General Conference (See Section VII.A.(7)(a)).

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

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

(4) Committees shall report to the Conference upon all matters referred to them by the Conference, directly or through the Committee on Reference. Committee reports on resolutions, petitions, etc., shall cite the same, identifying them by numbers they bear respectively in the published reports of the Committee on Reference or in some other suitable manner.
(5) When a committee ascertains that another committee is, or in its judgment should be, considering a subject, that the former is considering, it shall report the matter to the Committee on Reference for such adjustment as the situation may require.

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

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

Rule 35. Unfinished Business in Legislative Committee

Any legislation not acted upon by the legislative committee at the time of the Saturday evening adjournment of the first week of General Conference shall remain unfinished (See Rule 1.6 & See Section VII.7.F.3(d)).

Rule 36. Legislative Committee Report to the Daily Christian Advocate

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

(2) Committee and minority reports that propose changes in the Book of Discipline
shall give the paragraph number to be affected and shall be prepared in the
following manner: Existing words used as reference points shall be in quotation
marks; words to be deleted shall be in strike through; words to be added shall be
bolded. In the publication of these reports, the Daily Christian Advocate will use
the same convention (See Rule 38).

Rule 37. Published Reports in Possession of Conference

Reports submitted by the committee according to the deadline, as announced by the
Secretary of the General Conference, shall appear in the next day’s Daily Christian
Advocate. The report as printed published in the Daily Christian Advocate is the official
copy, subject only to grammatical, or other obvious editorial changes and shall be
regarded as in the possession of the Conference. On the day following its first
appearance in the Daily Christian Advocate or any time thereafter, a report is in order for
consideration at the pleasure of the conference. The same rule shall apply to a minority
report from any committee (See Rules 20, 27).

Rule 38. Preparation and Printing Publishing of Reports

(1) All committee reports shall be prepared using the approved General Conference
Legislative System. The committee reports shall bear at the top the name of the
committee, its total membership, the number present at the time the report was adopted, the number voting for and against the report, respectively, and the number not voting (See Rules 19, 31.2, 33.4, 34).

(2) Consent Calendar items (see Rules 31.3, 31.4) shall be clearly marked with an identifying symbol on the report cover and in the Daily Christian Advocate printing, this symbol to be supplied by the Secretary of the General Conference. The report to the Coordinator of the Calendar for items voted in committee shall include the name of the committee, its total membership, the number present at the time the item was adopted, and the number voting for and against the item.

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

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

Rule 39. Effective Date

All legislation of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church shall become effective January 1 following the session of the General Conference at which it is enacted, unless otherwise specified (See Section X and Book of Discipline ¶ 508).

V. Suspending, Amending, and Supplementing
Rule 38 39. Suspension of the Rules

The operation of any of the provisions of the *Plan of Organization and Rules of Order* may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the Conference (See Rule 29.45).

Rule 39 40. Amending Rules

The *Plan of Organization and Rules of Order* may be amended or changed by a two-thirds vote of the Conference; provided the proposed change or amendment has originated in the Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order or has been presented to the Conference in writing and referred to this committee, which committee shall report thereon not later than the following day (See Rule 29.45 and Section VI.D.1).

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

Rule 40 41. Robert’s Rules of Order, Supplemental Authority

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