



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



Report by Bishop on Decision of Law

This form is to be used for (please check one):

☒ Reporting of decisions of law made by bishops in response to questions of law submitted to them in writing during the regular business of a conference session (§ 56.3 Const. and ¶ 2609.6 *The Book of Discipline* 2016).

☐ Reporting of episcopal decisions on questions of law when such decisions are appealed by one-fifth of the members of the conference (§ 56.2 Const. and ¶ 2609.7 *The Book of Discipline* 2016).

Name of Bishop: Cynthia Moore-Koikoi

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Annual Conference: Western Pennsylvania Date of session: 06/09/2017 (month/day/year)

Question(s) of Law: _____

1) Are statements in Petition 307 aspirational in nature? _____

2) Is the statement in Petition 307 a true statement in accordance with paragraphs 17, 103, and 104? _____

Authorities Cited (indicate paragraph or decision number where applicable):

Constitution: _____ Book of Discipline: _____

Judicial Council Decision(s): 1160, 1286, 1293, 1294

Signature: 
Bishop of The United Methodist Church

Date: 07/06/2017
(month/day/year)

The following must be attached:

- Decision of Law, including facts, rationale and ruling
- Text of the written request for decision
- Minutes of annual conference proceedings (relevant portions only)
- List of names and addresses of interested parties
- Other relevant materials (e.g. conference rules, resolutions, policies, reports)

Send electronic copy of this form and all materials in PDF and Microsoft Word format to:
secretaryjudicialcouncil@gmail.com

Mail four (4) sets of hard copies to: Secretary of the Judicial Council, 5556 N Sheridan Road,
610; Chicago, IL 60640 USA

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OF THE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
DECISION OF LAW

SYLLABUS

The question of whether certain “resolved statements” of Petition 307 are aspirational in nature, whether a certain recital in Petition 307 is true and whether Petition 307 violates certain provision of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church - 2016*, are moot and hypothetical.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

At the plenary session of the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church on June 9, 2017, Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi ruled Petition 307 out of order. No appeal was taken to the house from that ruling. Instead, a clergy member raised the following Questions of Law:

WHEREAS, Petition 307 was properly submitted under the provisions of conference rules to the Secretary of the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference prior to May 1, 2017 and was printed in the Pre-Conference Journal.

WHEREAS, Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi did not permit the annual conference to discuss this legislation because under ¶¶ 33, 604, and 605, “any legislation pertaining to the actions of another Conference or the affairs outside of this Conference is improper.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi is requested to make a decision on the following question of law, under the provisions of ¶51 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church - 2016*, with regards to petition 307:

- 1) Are the following resolved statements of petition 307 aspirational in nature in accordance with JD 1044, 1052, 1218, and 1283?
 - a. Is the statement of petition 307, “THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Western PA Conference expresses our deep and heartfelt disappointment in our sibling conferences who have adopted policies and statements that restrict the evaluation of the fitness of candidates for ministry” aspirational in nature?
 - b. Is the statement of petition 307, “THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Western PA Conference applauds our Conference and District Boards of Ordained Ministry for not following in the example set by the New York Annual Conference's Board of Ordained Ministry's policy but rather staying true to the stipulations of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church - 2016*” aspirational in nature?

- 2) Is the statement of petition 307, "WHEREAS ¶¶103 and 104 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church - 2016* states that John Wesley's Explanatory Notes on the New Testament are doctrinal standards of The United Methodist Church" a true statement in accordance with ¶¶ 17, 103, and 104?
- 3) Is Petition 307 in violation of ¶¶ 33, 604, and 605 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church - 2016*?

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE

The questions raised are moot and hypothetical. Petition 307 was ruled out of order by the chair and this ruling was not appealed to the house. Accordingly, the questions of law which address Petition 307 did not relate to any action taken by the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference nor did the questions pertain to the business of the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference. A decision of law must relate to an action taken by the annual conference or to one under consideration by the annual conference. See, Judicial Council Decisions 1160, 1286, 1293 and 1294. As such, the questions are moot and hypothetical and it would be improper to offer any substantive decision on these questions of law.

DISPOSITION

The questions of law are moot and hypothetical as Petition 307 was no longer under consideration by the Annual Conference and the questions of law did not relate to any action taken by the Annual Conference.

WHEREAS, Petition 307 was properly submitted under the provisions of conference rules to the Secretary of the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference prior to May 1, 2017 and was printed in the Pre-Conference Journal.

WHEREAS, Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi did not permit the annual conference to discuss this legislation because under ¶¶ 33, 604, and 605, "any legislation pertaining to the actions of another Conference or the affairs outside of this Conference is improper."

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi is requested to make a decision on the following question of law, under the provisions of ¶51 of the *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist*, with regards to petition 307:

1) Are the following resolved statements of petition 307 aspirational in nature in accordance with JD 1044, 1052, 1218, and 1283?

a) Is the statement of petition 307, "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Western PA Conference expresses our deep and heartfelt disappointment in our sibling conferences who have adopted policies and statements that restrict the evaluation of the fitness of candidates for ministry" aspirational in nature?

b) Is the statement of petition 307, "THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Western PA Conference applauds our Conference and District Boards of Ordained Ministry for not following in the example set by the New York Annual Conference's Board of Ordained Ministry's policy but rather staying true to the stipulations of the Book of Discipline" aspirational in nature?

2) Is the statement of petition 307, "WHEREAS ¶¶103 and 104 of The Book of Discipline states that John Wesley's Explanatory Notes on the New Testament are doctrinal standards of The United Methodist Church." a true statement in accordance with ¶¶ 17, 103, and 104?

3) Is Petition 307 in violation of ¶¶ 33, 604, and 605 of *The Book of Discipline*?

Respectfully Submitted,

Nathanael Fugate

INTERESTED PARTIES
PETITION 307

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DAY TWO
Friday, June 9, 2017

MORNING SESSION

ORDER - Bishop Moore-Koikoi called the morning session to order at 8:10 AM.

BIBLE STUDY I - Bishop Moore-Koikoi introduced Rev. Dr. Dawn Chesser, from Discipleship Ministries, to lead our Bible Studies for the next few days. Rev. Chesser brings greetings from Rev. Junius B. Dotson, the new General Secretary of the General Board of Discipleship Ministries. She then led the body in a study of the 1st chapter of Paul's letter to the Colossians.

OPENING PRAYER - Jim Pond, District Superintendent of the Indiana District, offered an opening prayer before the start of the morning's plenary session. Following the prayer, Bishop Moore-Koikoi asked us to pray for a young man who fell on the steps of a church and hit his head. This is a life or death injury, and silent prayer was observed.

VOTING KEYPAD PRACTICE - Bill Patrick, Floor Manager, asked Alan Morrison, Agenda Coordinator, to lead the conference in a period of practice with the new digital voting system.

CONSENT CALENDAR - Lisa Grant presented the Legislation and Corporation Consent Calendars (Daily Journal pages 617-620). RS401 is an order of the day for Saturday, so it was automatically removed from the Consent Calendar. RS403 and P505 failed to receive a 75% margin, so according to conference rules, they are automatically removed from the Consent Calendar. In addition to these three items, P307 and P611 were both ruled out of order by Bishop Moore-Koikoi.

Keith McIlwain submitted a letter in writing asking for a question of law under ¶51 on Petition 611.

Nathanael Fugate submitted a letter in writing asking for a question of law under ¶51 on Petition 307.

Bishop Moore-Koikoi stated that she will respond to both resolutions within 30 days.

Lisa Grant reminded the body that with 25 signatures, by 9:00 PM Friday evening, an item can be removed from the Consent Calendar.

READING OF APPOINTMENTS: BUTLER DISTRICT - Bishop Moore-Koikoi reappointed Joel Garrett as the Superintendent for the Butler District. Joel Garrett then read the new appointments to the District, while all current District pastors welcomed and greeted each other. Bishop Moore-Koikoi offered a prayer for all pastors of the District.

X Conference By-Laws

X. Conference Rules

ARTICLE 2. SESSIONS

- 2.3.6 Sections — The Conference Sessions Team shall structure the session of the conference on the same basic plan as the General Conference so as to provide sections for study and review of reports, resolutions and petitions before they come to the floor of the Annual Conference.
- 2.3.6.1 Each section shall be designated by number and shall be assigned reports, resolutions and petitions by the Conference Secretary.
- 2.3.6.2 The Conference Secretary shall designate section chairpersons and vice-chairpersons (preferably members of the Annual Conference) of the several sections and a coordinator of the sections. Such designation shall supersede all other membership assignments to section and therefore if a chairperson is a member of the Annual Conference they would have the right to vote in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. Each section shall elect its own secretary.
- 2.3.6.3 The Conference Secretary shall be responsible for assignment of persons to membership in the several sections.
- 2.3.6.4 Notification of assignment to a specific section for study and review will be made at the time of the initial pre-conference report book mailing. Each member of the Annual Conference will be called upon to vote on ALL reports, resolutions and petitions reviewed by Legislative Section during the Plenary business sessions of the conference. All reports, resolutions and petitions assigned to the sections shall be reported to the Plenary session with recommendation for action.
- 2.3.6.5 All members of the Annual Conference, pastors under appointment, deaconesses under appointment, and young adult representatives shall be members of sections to discuss and if permitted in *The Book of Discipline* to vote on reports, resolutions and petitions before such matters reach the floor of the conference. All members of the Annual Conference may attend and speak in any section but their right to vote is limited to the section to which they are assigned.
- 2.3.7 Report to the Plenary Session — All reports submitted to the conference shall be presented by the Conference Secretary at the first plenary session to be received without action, in which case the report shall not be considered as having been adopted as the position of the conference. Any member of the conference may request, at this time, that a report be reviewed by a Legislative Section. Such reports shall be assigned to a Legislative Section by the Conference Secretary, and a recommendation that the report be accepted or rejected in whole, or in part, or amended, shall be made by that Legislative Section to the Plenary Session during that session of the Annual Conference.
- 2.3.7.1 All resolutions and petitions shall be assigned by the Conference Secretary to a Legislative Section. The section shall move the section's report which shall be the main motion before the Conference. The vote of the section (including any abstentions) shall be reported to the Plenary Session. Any resolution which includes an amendment by the section shall be so noted.
- 2.3.7.2 The presiding officer may permit the proponent of a report or resolution to speak if, in the opinion of the presiding officer, the report or resolution is complex, unclear, or controversial, but such occasion shall not be used for a promotional presentation. Amendments to the recommendations of a section may be made from the floor of the conference.
- 2.3.7.3 Each legislative section leader shall record the votes of the legislative section in respect to each item of business considered, and shall give such information to the legislative floor manager, and shall include such information in reporting to the conference on the action of the legislative section.

- 2.3.7.4 Any Annual Conference legislation approved by a legislative section with no more than 25% of votes cast against the prevailing position shall be placed on the consent calendar, which shall be published in the Daily Journal at least ten (10) hours prior to any consideration of such legislation.

Upon written request of any twenty-five (25) Conference members, a particular piece of legislation shall be removed from the consent calendar and shall be presented to the conference for debate and action.

All legislation on the consent calendar shall be presented to the conference at one time for approval.

- 2.3.7.5 Upon motion duly made, seconded, and upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members voting, the conference may group legislation for action by such categories as the conference may determine, such as legislation approved by a legislative section without an opposition vote greater than five of all section members voting, or greater than ten of all section members voting; provided, however, that any member may request that a particular item of legislation be removed from the group to be so acted upon, in which case that particular item of legislation shall be removed and thereafter called up in the regular order of business.

2.3.8 REPORTS AND RESOLUTIONS

- 2.3.8.1.1 Resolutions and Petitions — All reports and resolutions of conference agencies and petitions of individuals and local churches to be submitted to the Annual Conference shall be printed in the pre-conference report book. Where practical all petitions shall be submitted by the Conference Secretary to the appropriate board or agency for consideration and their recommendations shall be noted upon presentation to the section. No resolution or petition shall be considered by the conference unless it has been submitted to the Conference Secretary by May 1. All petitions to the Annual Conference must be accompanied by sufficient scriptural footnoting, in the margins or otherwise plainly marked, so that the foundation of scriptural holiness is evident, (Colossians 3:23-24). The Annual Conference may consider any petition without proper section review upon a two-thirds vote of the conference.

- 2.3.8.1.3 That each piece of proposed or adopted legislation shall include as a part of its body a statement that will designate the appropriate conference agency or leader who will implement the legislation and be responsible for reporting its status to the conference. If the Annual Conference directs a letter to be written, then a correspondence secretary is to be named in the legislation and mailing labels with the addressees will be supplied. In the absence of any of these four parts, the responsibility will be accomplished by the author of the legislation.

- 2.3.8.2 No reports, resolutions, or petitions submitted can be considered by a section without the presence of the author of the report, resolution, or petition, or an identified spokesperson for the report, resolution, or petition.

- 2.3.8.3 No proposed resolution or petition which seeks, in substance, conference approval of any provision of *The Book of Discipline* or *The Book of Resolutions*, shall be considered or acted upon by any legislative section, nor by the conference. The Conference Sessions Team may determine whether a proposed resolution or petition violates this rule and if it does so, such determination shall be noted in the first Daily Journal, published for a conference session, or such may be raised by any members on a point of order. Any appeal from a determination shall be made without debate by the President.

- 2.3.8.4 All resolutions to modify the present system of apportionments shall include data showing effect on apportionments for all churches, or permit sufficient time for this to be calculated in the conference treasurer's office before presentation to the Annual Conference.

- 2.3.8.5 Conference Sessions Team has the responsibility to review and refuse distribution and/or displays that are inappropriate or contrary to the Social Principles.

Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pre-Conference Reports and Proposed Legislation

This report is for all members of the Annual Conference meeting at Grove City College on Thursday, June 8, 2017 through Sunday, June 11, 2017. If you received this by mistake, please check to see if your representative needs this copy.

Also note: Information for Registration is Online: <http://www.wpaumc.org/AC>.

INSIDE:

Journal Order Form.....	2
Table of Contents	3
Reports.....	3
Legislation	4
Guidelines for Holy Conferencing	5
Basic Guide to Parliamentary Procedure	6
Legislative Sections	9
Nomination of Tellers	10
Activities Directory.....	11
Who to ask on the Conference Sessions Ministry Team.....	12
Day of Preparation Activities.....	13
Agenda.....	14
Alphabetical Listing of Members	16
Section Listing of Members.....	44
Reports	201
Projected 2017 Apportionments based on Proposed Budget	301
Legislation	401
Constitutional Amendments.....	491
Nominating Report	501
Daily Journal.....	601

Please forward **in writing** all corrections to the Conference Secretary.

John R. Wilson, Editor

Corrections: Conference Secretary
 Email: conference.secretary@wpaumc.org

Questions: Phone: 412/767-5646
 Email: conference.secretary@wpaumc.org

CONFERENCE SESSIONS MINISTRY TEAM
 Address: 293 Cowan Rd, Brookville Pa 15825
 Email: vjstahlman@yahoo.com

Chair: Vicki Stahlman
 Cell 814-590-3115

Legislation

Section 1

RS 101 Endorsing Health Care Coverage for ALL Kids in Pennsylvania	401
RS 102 Racial Justice.....	402
RS 103 Juvenile Justice.....	403
P 104 Justice Ministries	404

Section 2

RS 201 Connectional Leadership Team Membership	407
RS 202 Personnel Team.....	407
P 203 General & Jurisdictional Delegates	409

Section 3

RS 301 Full-Time General Evangelist: Christine Rogan.....	412
RS 302 General Evangelist: John Zimmerman	412
RS 303 Conference Evangelist: Luella Krieger	413
RS 304 Base Cash Compensation For Pastors	414
RS 305 Accountable Reimbursement Account	415
RS 306 Clergy Housing Allowance Resolution	416
P 307 Limitation on Board Policies	417

Section 4

RS 401 Funding For Ministry 2018 Budget	419
RS 402 Funding For Ministry 2018 Other Income Disbursal Directives	437
RS 403 Sessions Registration Fee	463
RS 404 South Avenue Plan For Ministry	463

Section 5

RS 501 2018 Rental/Housing Allowance for Retired Clergy	467
RS 502 Clergy Retirement Security Program & Comprehensive Protection Plan.....	468
RS 503 CRSP Future Liabilities & Benefit Reserve Fund	469
RS 504 2018 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan Summary	470
P 505 Declaratory Decision...for Pension and Benefit Programs	471

Section 6

RS 601 Disability Awareness Weekend (Feb)	480
RS 602 Golden Cross/Red Stocking Weekend (May/Dec)	481
RS 603 Rural Life Weekend (Aug)	481
RS 604 Retired Clergy Weekend (Sept).....	481
RS 605 Christian Education Weekend (Sept).....	482
RS 606 Camping Weekend (Oct)	482
RS 607 Volunteers in Mission Recognition & Awareness Weekend (Oct).....	483
RS 608 Youth Service Fund Weekend (Nov)	483
RS 609 Doorways to Hope at Home Weekend (Dec)	484
RS 610 Funding for WPAUMC Regional Ministries.....	484
P 611 Petition Against Actions of Non-Conformity.....	485

Section 7

RS 701 Camp Allegheny Nominations	490
RS 702 Jumonville Nominations.....	490
RS 703 Olmsted Manor Nominations	490
RS 704 Wesley Woods Nominations	490

BASIC PARLIAMENTARY GUIDE

"Conference" is a term applied uniquely in United Methodism. Having its origin in the concept of a "preacher's meeting." The Annual Conference (e.g. Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference) is the basic organic and functional unit of the Church in a geographical area, now consisting of an equal number of clergy and lay members. But the term also applies to the annual occasion when those members of the Conference convene to do its "work."

The term is also given to the smaller units of structure called Districts and to the local churches or charges; likewise at the regional and national level are the Jurisdictional and General Conferences.

Whatever other function the Conference may perform, it is the legislative and decision making body for its constituency. As a member of it, you need to understand that and be prepared to participate in legislation and the legislative process.

Parliamentary law or procedure is the system of principles and rules governing the transaction of business in deliberative groups. It is designed to clarify and expedite decisions.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Although many rules of order exist in parliamentary law, they are consistent with and in large measure based upon the following principles:

1. The simplest and most direct method of doing business is the correct and proper procedure.
2. The decision of a majority of those voting governs, except where such decisions contravene By-Laws or violates some other basic rights of a member.
3. Every member of an organization has the right to full and free discussion of every question.
4. All business of an organization must be done by a motion, or, as it is called in its most formal form, a resolution.
5. Other kinds of motions, secondary motions, exist to deal with the main motion or meet some immediate requirement of the organization.

TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS

All business of an organization is initiated and concluded by motions; the discussion on the merits of the idea follow, not precede, the making of a motion. Each motion should be handled in the following manner:

1. Made: Any member previously recognized by the chair may make a motion.
2. Seconded: Without being recognized, any member may second a motion.

3. Stated: The chair should repeat the motion by virtue of which the chair implicitly:

- (a) decides that the motion is in order; and
- (b) delivers the question, as it were, to the membership.

4. Discussed and possibly amended: As to all debatable motions, the maker has the right to speak first; amendments are voted on before the final vote on the motion. Some special motions, like the motion to "table" are not debatable.

5. Vote taken: The chair must indicate the manner of voting, e.g. by voice, show of hands, rising, and if any doubt exists, the effect of the voting for or against the motion.

6. Results announced: The chair should ordinarily be prepared to give the tally of votes cast, particularly if there is a question about outcome.

In our Annual Conference, resolutions and other main motions cannot be considered (come to the "floor") until they have been acted on by one of the legislative sections of the Conference. The legislative section chairperson, not the author of the motion, therefore, moves its adoption.

PRECEDENCE

A definite and logical order governs introduction and disposition of the secondary motions which may come before the meeting while some main motion is under consideration. This means that the motion higher on the list must be dealt with first, or to state the obverse, the motion lower on the list must yield or wait its turn for disposition of the higher.

This is called the Order of Precedence of Motions, and is as follows:

1. Fix the time for next meeting
2. Adjourn
3. Recess
4. Question of privilege
5. Lay on the table
6. Vote immediately (Previous Question)
7. Limit Debate
8. Postpone to a definite time
9. Refer to a committee
10. Amend the main motion
11. Postpone indefinitely
12. Main motion

FREQUENT SITUATIONS

Amendments: Subject to the following rules, any motion can be amended if it is logically subject to being changed:

1. Amendment must be germane (relevant) to the motion.
2. Amendment may be opposite in the direction or spirit of the motion so long as it does not nullify it.

3. Amendment must be in the form of insertion, elimination, or substitution, and the form must be specified when the amendment is offered.
4. Any number of primary amendments (to the motion) may be made so long as they are made and disposed of one at a time.
5. Any number of secondary amendments (to a primary amendment) may be made so long as they are made and disposed of one at a time.
6. All amendments require a majority vote regardless of the vote required on the motion to which they may apply.

Substitute: In United Methodist circles a custom has developed which has no written origin in any parliamentary text: that a motion to "substitute" a whole sentence, paragraph, or motion is a special kind of secondary motion that "takes precedence" over other amendments and can be applied to almost any other motion.

Asking Questions/Points of Order: If a member is uncertain about the meaning or effect of a particular motion or resolution, the member may ask the chair or another member by simply addressing the chair and saying, "I would like to ask a question," or its equivalent. If the question is related to the procedure, the member would say instead, "I would like to ask a parliamentary question," or say, "Parliamentary inquiry." If the member believes the Rules have been violated in some way, the call should be "Point of Order." These statements are always in order except during the actual process of a vote.

Voting:

1. Motions are voted on either when no one wishes to speak further on the motion, or pursuant to a motion to "vote immediately," traditionally called the "previous question."
2. The motion to vote immediately must be made, seconded, stated and itself voted on and approved by a 2/3 vote before the vote is taken on the otherwise pending motion.
3. A call of "Question" by a member not recognized by the chairperson has no significance whatsoever.

LEGISLATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Section assignments of legislation fluctuates in an attempt to keep workloads fairly even (equal) between the sections, however this year, legislation will fall into the following areas: Those assigned to Section A have a voice but not vote in Any section.

Section 1.....	Church & Society
Section 2.....	Conference
Section 3.....	Program
Section 4.....	Finance
Section 5.....	Pensions
Section 6.....	Missions
Section 7.....	Corporations

SECTION ASSIGNMENT OF MEETING PLACES

Section # (Room Capacity)	Building: Room Location
Section 1 (200)	Pew Fine Arts: Rehearsal Hall (Room 25)
Section 2 (110)	Stem Hall: Lecture Room
Section 3 (200)	Pew Fine Arts: Little Theater
Section 4 (687)	Pew Fine Arts: Ketler Auditorium
Section 5 (219)	Hall of Arts and Letters: Stricht Auditorium (HAL Room 108)
Section 6 (170)	Pew Fine Arts: Recital Hall (Room 106)
Section 7 (206)	Technical Learning Center: Auditorium

ASSIGNMENT OF SECTION LEADERS

Coordinators:..... Greg Spencer, GUINEVERE GREGORY, Linda Chambers
 Floor Managers: BILL PATRICK, Kelly Smith

SECTION CONTENT	TEAM (First Named is Team Convener)			
I Church & Society	Steve Morse	Donna Burkhart	John Hodge	Dennis Westbrooks
II Conference	Larry Dunn	Shirley Cooper	Tim Bowser	
III Program	Bev Roscoe	Tom Kendig	Jim Sands	
IV Finance	Jeff Sterling	Jan Davis	Jonathan Beranek	
V Pensions	Cyndi Bloise	Jim Kimmel	Roger Pike	Eric Duda
VI Missions	Les Hutchins	Rick Nelson	Terry Trudgen	Emily McClintic
VII Corporations	Rita Platt	Dan Miller	Robert Nagy	

**P 307 Petition: A Limitation on Conference and District
Boards of Ordained Ministry Policies**
(Section 3)

WHEREAS Scripture calls the Church to be unified in mind and thought (I Corinthians 1:10),

WHEREAS Scripture teaches that leaders of the Church are to be above reproach and worthy of respect in all things (I Timothy 3:1-13),

WHEREAS ¶304.3 of the *Book of Discipline* states, "While persons set apart by the Church for ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition and the pressures of society, they are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living in the world. The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church."

WHEREAS ¶635.2.h states, "[The duties of the Board of Ordained Ministry shall be] To examine all applicants as to their fitness for ordained ministry and make a full inquiry as to the fitness of the candidate for: 1) annual election as local pastor; 2) election to associate membership; 3) election to provisional membership; 4) election to full conference membership."

WHEREAS ¶369.3 states, "In the cases where district committees on ordained ministry, boards of ordained ministry, or clergy in executive session vote on granting any status regarding license, ordination, or conference membership, it is understood that the requirements set for herein are minimum requirements only. Each person voting is expected to vote prayerfully based on his or her personal judgments of the applicant's gifts, evidence of God's grace, and promise to future usefulness for the mission of the Church."

WHEREAS the footnote to ¶310.2.d states that the judgments of the executive session of the Annual Conference, with regards to changes to conference membership, are based upon the recommendations of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the trust that the board's recommendations are based upon full inquiries into the fitness of the candidates for ministry as guided by the minimum requirements set forth in the *Discipline*.

WHEREAS ¶¶103 and 104 of *The Book of Discipline* states that John Wesley's Explanatory Notes on the New Testament are doctrinal standards of The United Methodist Church.

WHEREAS John Wesley's notes for 1 Corinthians 11:18 denounce divisional statements in the Church, stating, "It is plain that by schisms is not meant any separation from the church, but uncharitable divisions in it; for the Corinthians continued to be one church; and, notwithstanding all their strife and contention, there was no separation of any one party from the rest, with regard to external communion. And it is in the same sense that the word is used, 1 Corinthians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 12:25; which are the only places in the New Testament, beside this, where church schisms are mentioned. Therefore, the indulging any temper contrary to this tender care of each other is the true scriptural schism. This is, therefore, a quite different thing from that orderly separation from corrupt churches which later ages have stigmatized as schisms; and have made a pretence for the vilest cruelties, oppressions, and murders, that have troubled the Christian world. Both heresies and schisms are here mentioned in very near the same sense; unless by schisms be meant, rather, those inward animosities which occasion heresies; that is, outward divisions or parties: so that whilst one said, 'I am of Paul,' another, 'I am of Apollos,' this implied both schism and heresy. So wonderfully have later ages distorted the words heresy and schism

47 from their scriptural meaning. Heresy is not, in all the Bible, taken for 'an error in
48 fundamentals,' or in anything else; nor schism, for any separation made from the outward
49 communion of others. Therefore, both heresy and schism, in the modern sense of the words,
50 are sins that the scripture knows nothing of; but were invented merely to deprive mankind
51 of the benefit of private judgment, and liberty of conscience."

52 WHEREAS The New York Annual Conference's Board of Ordained Ministry has adopted
53 a policy which prevents the board from conducting a full inquiry of candidates as to their
54 fitness for ministry by, "not consider[ing] the sexual orientation in evaluating a clergy
55 candidate, even if that individual has a spouse of the same gender"
56 ([http://www.umc.org/news-and-media/new-york-board-welcomes-gay-clergy-](http://www.umc.org/news-and-media/new-york-board-welcomes-gay-clergy-candidates)
57 [candidates](http://www.umc.org/news-and-media/new-york-board-welcomes-gay-clergy-candidates)).

58 WHEREAS The New York Annual Conference's Board of Ordained Ministry's policy has
59 been set as a standard in the following annual conferences: Northern Illinois Annual
60 Conference, Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference, California-Nevada Annual
61 Conference, Wisconsin Annual Conference, New England Annual Conference, Pacific
62 Northwest Annual Conference.

63 WHEREAS ¶635.1.b states that, "[The Board of Ordained Ministry] shall be directly
64 amenable to the annual conference [...]"

65 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Western PA Conference expresses our deep
66 and heartfelt disappointment in our sibling conferences who have adopted policies and
67 statements that restrict the evaluation of the fitness of candidates for ministry.

68 THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Western PA Conference applauds
69 our Conference and District Boards of Ordained Ministry for not following in the example
70 set by the New York Annual Conference's Board of Ordained Ministry's policy but rather
71 staying true to the stipulations of the *Book of Discipline*.

72 Nathanael Fugate, Jacob Judy, Joni Williams,
73 Donald Henderson, Randy Hall
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List of Interested Parties in Docket No. 1017-6

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