2008 General Conference Visitors Guide
The 40th Anniversary Edition

2008 General Conference Media Guide Enclosed

United Methodist Communications
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Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the land. Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into His presence with singing!
Greetings to you in the strong name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Since 2000, I have had the privilege of serving as the resident bishop of the Fort Worth Area and the Central Texas Conference.

On behalf of all the United Methodists of the Central Texas Conference, it is a pleasure for me to welcome you to Fort Worth for the 2008 General Conference of The United Methodist Church. The Central Texas Conference has a proud history. This conference has had a membership gain in each of the last 33 consecutive years. We also count it a privilege to pay our General Church apportionments. We are pleased to be part of a great denomination that follows the tradition of John Wesley in offering personal salvation and social justice in an increasingly complex world. And we rejoice with you in having an opportunity to impact human lives and world events by our ministry and mission efforts in this world.

It is with gracious hospitality that the United Methodists in the Fort Worth Area have prepared for your coming. We want you to be as comfortable as possible at the General Conference of 2008, so that together we can represent the Christian gospel to the larger church and to the world.

With you we look forward to “A Future with Hope.”

Bishop Ben R. Chamness
The Fort Worth Area
FYI: WHERE TO TURN

The General Conference Web site is www.gc2008.umc.org. This is your go-to place for updates on the assembly, news and feature stories, petition tracking and video streaming of key sessions. Stories and daily summaries also will be available by e-mail from United Methodist News Service. Details are on the General Conference site.

Key events during General Conference can be viewed online as they happen. Live video streaming will be provided of the Episcopal Address, Laity Address, Young People’s Address, daily morning worship services and other special events. Streamed items are available at www.gc2008.umc.org.

If you have questions about The United Methodist Church or General Conference, contact InfoServ, (800) 251-8140 or infoserv@umcom.org, or go to The United Methodist Church’s Web site, www.umc.org, and click on “Questions.”

GENERAL CONFERENCE: AN OVERVIEW

The United Methodist Church’s top legislative body, the General Conference, will gather April 23-May 2 in Fort Worth, Texas. Nine hundred and ninety-two delegates from around the world will set policy and direction for the church, as well as handle other business. General Conference is the only entity that speaks for The United Methodist Church.

The theme of the conference will be “A Future with Hope.”

Sites for the international gatherings, held every four years, are rotated among the church’s five regional U.S. jurisdictions. The 2008 assembly will be in the South Central Jurisdiction.

The 2008 conference has been planned by the 17-member Commission on the General Conference, led by the Rev. Gail Murphy-Geiss of Centennial, Colo. A local committee from the Central Texas Annual Conference, under the leadership of Bishop Benjamin Chamness, is hosting the event. The Rev. Allen Goss is chairperson of the Host Committee. Some 4,000 people will serve in a variety of volunteer roles such as greeters, registration officials, marshals, pages, translators, hosts and hostesses, guides, drivers, musicians, technicians, reporters and emergency-response volunteers.

The projected cost of the 2008 session is $6.6 million, compared with $4.1 million for the 2000 conference and $5.3 million for the 2004 session. Three percent of the cost is for committee functions and Commission on General Conference expenses; 9 percent covers the cost of the offices of the business manager, treasurer and secretary of the General
In the same way let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.
Conference; 24 percent is for operations; 18 percent for language services; and 46 percent for delegate expenses.

About $1.6 million of the total $6.6 million will pay for delegate travel, and $1.4 million will fund the cost of housing and food (each delegate will be given $118 per diem). The Daily Christian Advocate will cost $265,000, and the computerized petitions-tracking system will be $230,000. Renting the convention center is expected to total $99,000.

THE SITE

When General Conference convenes in Fort Worth, The United Methodist Church will celebrate its 40th anniversary 30 miles from its 1968 birthplace in the Dallas Convention Center. On April 23, 1968, the 10.3 million-member Methodist Church and the 750,000-member Evangelical United Brethren Church merged to become The United Methodist Church. The assembly also created a churchwide Commission on Religion and Race and a Commission on Archives and History.

The site for General Conference is rotated among the church’s five geographic U.S. jurisdictions. Since 1968, the conferences have been held in the following cities:

1968  Dallas (uniting conference)
1970  St. Louis (special session)
1972  Atlanta
1976  Portland, Ore.
1980  Indianapolis
1984  Baltimore
1988  St. Louis
1992  Louisville, Ky.
1996  Denver
2000  Cleveland
2004  Pittsburgh

The 2012 General Conference will meet in Tampa, Fla.
GENERAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

The Committee on Agenda will plan in detail the schedule for each day of the conference. The first week is primarily for legislative committee work. The second week is for plenary sessions.

REGISTRATION

Tuesday, April 22
2 p.m.to 8 p.m. Houston Street Concourse of the Fort Worth Convention Center

Wednesday, April 23
8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Houston Street Concourse of the Fort Worth Convention Center

Thursday, April 24
8 a.m. to noon Houston Street Concourse of the Fort Worth Convention Center

Registration after noon April 24 will be in the Business Manager’s Office.

AGENDA

Tuesday, April 22
9 a.m. (all day) Committee on Reference  Commission on Central Conference Affairs
11:00 a.m. (all day) Committee on Calendar and Agenda
2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Training of recorders
7:30 p.m. Parliamentarian training
**Wednesday, April 23**

8:30 a.m. Orientation for heads of delegations

9 a.m. to noon Orientation for marshals and pages

9:30 a.m. to noon Orientation for delegates to from outside the United States

10:30 a.m. Organization of Committee on Courtesies and Privileges

Organization of Committee on Presiding Officers

Organization of Committee on Credentials

Organization of Committee on the Journal

12 to 2:30 p.m. Orientation for women delegates

3 to 4:30 p.m. Orientation for delegates under age 30

3 to 5 p.m. Orientation for racial and ethnic minority delegates

5:15 to 6 p.m. Choral music in the plenary

6 p.m. Opening Worship & Holy Communion

Preachers: Bishops Janice Riggle Huie & Gregory Vaughn Palmer

"Celebrating God’s Promise of Hope"

8 p.m. Organization of the General Conference

**Thursday, April 24**

7 a.m. Committee on Calendar and Agenda

Committee on Reference

7:45 a.m. Choral music
8 a.m. Plenary call to order

Morning worship

Episcopal Address: “The Foundation for Hope”
Bishop Sharon BrownChristopher

“What is Working – Vision Pathways”

“Building on What Works – Areas of Focus”

10:45 a.m. Plenary call to order

“Moving Forward” – Connectional Table

“The Tools for Moving Forward” – General Council on Finance and Administration

11:35 a.m. Young People’s Address: “Many Voices, One Call”
Andrew Craig, Becca Farnum, Matt Lockett, Jason Rathrod, Kira Volkova, and the Rev. Annie Arnoldy

12:25 p.m. Midday wrap-up

12:30 p.m. Lunch recess

2:30 p.m. Plenary call to order

Laity Address: “Disciples Transforming the World” – Lyn Powell

Call to action

Conference announcements

4 to 4:30 p.m. Organization of legislative committees

4:30 to 7:45 p.m. Training for legislative committee chairs, vice chairs, secretaries, assistant secretaries, parliamentarians, and recorders (dinner provided)
5 p.m. Daily deadline for *Daily Christian Advocate* printing
8 to 11 p.m. Legislative committees

**Basic schedule for remainder of General Conference**

7 a.m. Committee on Calendar and Agenda
       Committee on Reference
8 a.m. Choral music
8:15 a.m. Plenary call to order
         Morning worship
9:05 a.m. Reports (as necessary)
         Committee on Courtesies and Privileges
         Committee on Calendar and Agenda
         Committee on Presiding Officers
9:20 to 10:25 a.m. Plenary – calendar items and conference business
10:25 to 10:45 a.m. Morning break
10:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Plenary – conference business
12:30 p.m.
12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Lunch recess
12:40 to 1:10 p.m. Service of Holy Communion
2:30 to 3:40 p.m. Plenary – conference business
3:40 to 4 p.m. Afternoon break
4 to 5 p.m. Plenary – conference business
5 p.m. Daily deadline for Daily Christian Advocate printing

5 to 7:30 p.m. Dinner recess

7:30 to 11 p.m. Plenary – conference business

Friday, April 25 – Orders of the Day

9:20 a.m. Greetings from the City of Fort Worth

Nominations for the University Senate and Judicial Council

Introduction of affiliated and concordat church delegates

Saturday, April 26 – Orders of the Day

9:20 a.m. Rural Life Celebration

10:45 a.m. Central Conference Pension Initiative
(15 minutes)

Task Force to Study the Episcopacy (30 minutes)

General Conference Study Commission on the Relationship between The United Methodist Church and the Autonomous Methodist Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean
(30 minutes)

Sunday, April 27 – Orders of the Day

9:20 a.m. Recognition of retiring bishops

Presentation of new Episcopal Leadership Team

Strengthening the Black Church Initiative (15 minutes)

Celebration: 40th anniversary of the dissolution of the Central Jurisdiction (12 minutes)

2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Legislative committees

4:30 p.m. Dinner recess
7:30 p.m. Area night program and reception

No legislative committees will meet Sunday evening

Monday, April 28 – Orders of the Day
9:20 a.m. Katrina report
(12 minutes)

Elections: University Senate, Judicial Council, Commission on the General Conference, Secretary of the General Conference, Trustees of John Street Church, Inter-Jurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy, General Council on Finance and Administration, other bodies to be elected

12:10 p.m. Celebration: 60th anniversary of the Advance (12 minutes)

3:30 p.m. Celebration moment (5 minutes)

Tuesday, April 29 – Orders of the Day
9:20 a.m. Presentation of ecumenical guests and greetings

12:10 p.m. Celebration: 40th anniversary of the General Commission on Religion and Race
(12 minutes)

2:30 p.m. Address: President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Republic of Liberia

3:30 p.m. Celebration moment
(5 minutes)

Wednesday, April 30 – Orders of the Day
9:20 a.m. Africa University report
(15 minutes)

12:10 p.m. Celebration: 100th anniversary of the United Methodist Men
(12 minutes)
3:30 p.m. Celebration moment
(5 minutes)

Thursday, May 1 - Orders of the Day
9:20 a.m. Recognition of retiring Judicial Council members
          Introduction of new Judicial Council members
12:10 p.m. Celebration: 100th anniversary of the General Board of
          Pension and Health Benefits
          (12 minutes)
3:30 p.m. Celebration moment
(5 minutes)

Friday, May 2 - Orders of the Day
9:20 a.m. Report from the General Council on Finance and Administration
12:10 p.m. Celebration: 100th anniversary of the Social Principles
          (12 minutes)
3:15 p.m. Celebration moment (20 minutes)
          End of business; recognitions; closing worship
          Final adjournment

A WORD ABOUT SCHEDULES
Because of the fluid nature of General Conference, it is impossible to tell exactly when
delegates will discuss a particular issue. Even when an item is scheduled, it can be delayed if
other issues have taken more time than expected. Items can also be added at the last minute
if more time is available than expected.

Late each night, a committee meets to plan the agenda for the next day. This proposed
agenda appears in the early-morning Daily Christian Advocate. Even then, there is no
guarantee that the schedule will be followed. Occasionally, the delegates schedule an
order of the day to discuss a particular subject in plenary sessions.
SPECIAL EVENTS

The Commission on the General Conference has invited two United Methodist presidents—George W. Bush of the United States and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia—to address the assembly.

Bush and his wife, Laura, are members of Highland Park United Methodist Church in Dallas, where both taught Sunday school prior to his election. He is the third Methodist to serve as U.S. president. The others were William McKinley (1897-1901) and Rutherford B. Hayes (1877-1881).

Johnson Sirleaf is an active member of First United Methodist Church in Monrovia, Liberia. Before her inauguration ceremony in January 2006, she participated in a worship service led by Liberian United Methodist Bishop John Innis and Bishop Peter Weaver of Boston, who was then president of the Council of Bishops. The United Methodist Church has been active in Liberia since 1822, and it is the largest Protestant denomination in the West African nation. In 1977, Liberian Bishop Bennie D. Warner was chosen to be vice president of the country.

Johnson Sirleaf is scheduled to speak to General Conference April 29. She will also accept the Bishop James K. and Eunice Mathews Bridge-Building Award from the United Methodist Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns at a dinner that evening.

In 2004, President Bush and Macedonia President Boris Trajkovski were invited to address the conference. Bush was unable to appear, and Trajkovski, who had been scheduled to address the delegates, died in a plane crash earlier that year. In 1996, then-U.S. first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, a United Methodist, addressed the General Conference in Denver.

The conference will open Wednesday, April 23, with a Service of Holy Communion at 6 p.m.

The Episcopal Address, prepared by the Council of Bishops, will be given at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 24, by Illinois Area Bishop Sharon Brown Christopher. The title will be, “The Foundation for Hope.”
But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in a regular assembly.
The Laity Address will be delivered by Lyn Powell, lay leader of the North Georgia Conference and president of the Southeastern Jurisdiction’s lay leader association. The title of her speech as approved by the annual conference lay leaders will be “Disciples Transforming the World.” She will speak at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 24.

Six United Methodists ranging in age from 15 to 28 have been chosen to develop and deliver the first Young People’s Address. The address, “Many Voices, One Call,” will be given at 11:35 a.m. on Thursday, April 24. The speakers will give a 45-minute presentation on the concerns, hopes and dreams of young people. The speakers are Becca Farnum of Mount Pleasant, Mich.; Kira Volkova of Kirov, Russia; the Rev. Annie Arnoldy of Grand Junction, Colo.; Andrew Craig of Denver; Matt Lockett of Seattle; and Jason Rathod of Hastings, Neb. The six were selected from 37 individuals and youth groups that submitted video related to youth and young adult issues in the church.

Many bishops will speak in Fort Worth area churches on the Sunday before the gathering.

**MAIN TASKS**

During the 10-day session, 992 delegates will revise *The Book of Discipline*, which regulates the manner in which local churches, annual conferences and general agencies are organized. The book sets policies regarding church membership, ordination, administration, property and judicial procedures. The assembly may modify most disciplinary paragraphs by majority vote, but the Constitution can only be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote, followed by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members voting in annual conference session. Delegates may not revoke or change the Articles of Religion or the Confession of Faith unless two-thirds of the delegates agree to change this provision and three-fourths of the annual conference members also agree.

Delegates also revise *The Book of Resolutions*, a volume declaring the church’s stance on a variety of social justice issues. The book contains more than 300 resolutions that are considered instructive and persuasive, but are not binding on members.

In addition, the assembly approves plans and budgets for churchwide programs for the next four years and elects members of the Judicial Council and the University Senate.
KEY PEOPLE

Delegates: Equal numbers of lay and clergy delegates are selected from each annual conference. Every annual conference is guaranteed one lay and one clergy delegate.

Just as the U.S. Congress redistricts every 10 years following a national census, the number of lay and clergy delegates assigned from each annual conference changes each quadrennium based on the number of lay and clergy members. The total number of delegates is limited to 1,000. The 2008 conference will have an increased number of delegates from outside the United States.

Groups of churches in Africa, Asia and Europe are known as “central conferences.” Central conferences will have 278 delegates, up 100 from the 2004 assembly and up 136 from the gathering in 2000. One hundred eighty-six of the central conference delegates will be from Africa, up 94 from 2004. The 21 annual conferences in the Philippines will have 42 delegates. An additional 10 delegates will come from “concordat” churches with which the denomination has a formal relationship: four from Great Britain and two each from Puerto Rico, Mexico and the Caribbean & the Americas. The United Methodist Church has special covenant relationships with the Methodist traditions in those countries.

Bishops: Retired and active bishops attend the conference but do not vote and may not speak in plenary sessions without permission from the assembly. Individual bishops preside over business sessions, normally serving for one morning, afternoon or evening period. All bishops, active and retired, attend the entire conference. Presiding bishops are selected by a General Conference committee. Each bishop selects a bishop to serve as a parliamentarian.

Conference officials: Secretary of the General Conference is the Rev. L. Fitzgerald “Gere” Reist, a clergy member of the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference. Business manager of the conference is the Rev. Alan J. Morrison, a staff executive with the General Council on Finance and Administration.

Judicial Council: If questions related to constitutionality emerge during the conference, the nine-member United Methodist Judicial Council will meet and make a decision. President of the council is Dr. James Holsinger of Lexington, Ky. The delegates meeting in Fort Worth will elect the 2009-2012 members of the Judicial Council, the denomination’s supreme court.

Musicians: Marcia McFee of Truckee, Calif., and Mark Miller of Plainfield, N.J., were selected by the Commission on the General Conference to serve as co-music directors.
McFee is the principal of Peace by Peace Productions, where she serves as a consultant on worship, arts and preaching. She has preached, taught and led worship at numerous United Methodist gatherings in the United States, Europe and Asia.

Miller is director of music and instructor of church music at Drew Theological School, Madison, N.J. He also serves as minister of music at Covenant United Methodist Church, Plainfield, and is a lecturer at the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

Other participants: About 2,500 visitors are expected during the 10-day meeting. That will include all members of the General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table. Chief executive officers of the 13 general church agencies will also attend.

Sources of Legislation
Primary sources of legislation are petitions and proposals from church agencies and organizations. Petitions must be submitted 150 days before the opening of the conference. Any organization, ordained minister or lay member of the church may petition the General Conference. More than 1,600 pieces of legislation are expected at the 2008 assembly.

As in the U.S. Congress, the bulk of General Conference business is conducted in legislative committees. Each committee receives petitions and proposals, debates them, and determines whether to approve, amend, combine or reject them for recommendation to the full body of General Conference.

All proposed legislation — from individuals, organizations, churchwide agencies and annual conferences — is printed in the Advance Daily Christian Advocate.

Legislative Committees
All 13 legislative committees of the General Conference will meet in the convention center. The meetings are open to all, including media representatives, though space may be limited. The names of people serving on each legislative committee can be found in the Handbook for Delegates volume of the Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate.

The committees review, sort and refine legislative proposals. No action is final until taken by the General Conference in plenary session. Progress reports from each committee will appear in the next day’s issue of the Daily Christian Advocate.

The 13 committees and their assigned topics:

1) Church and Society 1
This committee will receive all petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns
of the Board of Church and Society and the Social Principles, with the exception of paragraphs in *The Book of Discipline* dealing with the nurturing community and the social community.

2) Church and Society
All petitions and resolutions relating to the nurturing community and the social community sections of the Social Principles will be referred to this committee.

3) Conferences
This committee shall receive all petitions and resolutions relating to the composition and activities of the General, jurisdictional, annual, provisional, missionary and district conferences.

4) Discipleship
All petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of the Board of Discipleship shall be referred to this committee.

5) Faith and Order
All petitions relating to Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task, the Ministry of All Christians and the meaning of ordination and conference membership will be referred to this committee.

6) Financial Administration
This committee shall receive all petitions and resolutions 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.

7) General Administration
Petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of the Connectional Table shall be referred to this committee. The report of the Connectional Table shall be submitted to this committee for study and review. After the Connectional Table presents its report to the General Conference for action, the committee shall present its recommendations and may propose amendments.

8) Global Ministries
All petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of the Board of Global Ministries shall be referred to this committee.

9) Independent Commissions
This committee shall receive all petitions and resolutions relating to commissions and ecumenical concerns. The commissions include Archives and History, Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, Communications,
And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us. A fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
Religion and Race, the Status and Role of Women, and United Methodist Men. Ecumenical concerns relate to the denomination’s membership in or relationship with the World Methodist Council, the National Council of Churches, other councils and consultations of churches, and the American Bible Society.

10) Judicial Administration
All petitions and resolutions relating to judiciary concerns and investigations, trials and appeals are handled by this committee.

11) Local Church
This committee will receive all petitions and resolutions relating to the organization of the local church and its membership, programs, boards, councils, commissions and committees. The committee will also consider petitions relating to local church property.

12) Ministry and Higher Education
All petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of ordained ministries, higher education, seminaries, and the Division of Chaplaincy and Related Ministries of the Board of Higher Education and Ministry shall be referred to this committee.

13) Superintendency
Petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of superintendents shall be referred to this committee.

In addition, a **Commission on Central Conference Affairs** will handle legislative proposals affecting central conferences.

Recommendations by a legislative committee emerging the first week of the conference are just that — recommendations. No action is final until the entire General Conference approves it. Most final actions are taken during the second week of the conference. Only the General Conference speaks officially for the denomination.

If legislation involving funding is approved by a plenary session, that action is referred to the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) and the Connectional Table (or their executive committees or expenditure review groups) for their advice and review. The groups will bring the legislation back to the assembly with specific recommendations about sources and amounts. When GCFA and the Connectional Table present their report, the Financial Administration Legislative Committee will present its own recommendations and may propose amendments to these recommendations. Only after the conference takes action on this funding proposal does the legislation take effect.
If a proposed change in the Constitution is approved by two-thirds of the General Conference delegates, that action must be ratified by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of annual conference members voting at their yearly gatherings. A proposal to alter one of the Articles of Religion or the Confession of Faith requires a three-fourths majority of annual conference members. No changes may take place until approval is announced by the Council of Bishops.

Most legislation becomes effective Jan. 1, 2009, unless the legislation specifically includes another date.

**TRACKING LEGISLATION**

Following legislation through the General Conference maze can be a challenge. Issues come before the delegates most often in the form of petitions sent by individuals, groups, annual (regional) conferences and governing boards of general agencies. You can find these in the *Advance Daily Christian Advocate* and online at the General Conference’s Web site, www.gc2008.umc.org.

Petitions from individuals, local churches, annual conferences and general agencies are given numbers and assigned to one of 13 legislative committees. Each delegate serves on a committee, and delegates spend most of the first four days in committee meetings.

Each legislative committee deals with petitions related to series of paragraphs from *The Book of Discipline*. Petitions related to *The Book of Resolutions* are sorted by subject.

A legislative committee can recommend to adopt, reject or refer a petition to a General Conference plenary session. That recommendation is called a “calendar item”; the item is assigned a number and printed in the *Daily Christian Advocate*.

The Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order is proposing to eliminate language of “concurrence or non-concurrence or concurrence as amended.”

The rules of General Conference are approved by delegates prior to any legislative actions. Rules proposed by the Committee on Plan of Organization and Rules of Order will call for legislative committee calendar items with fewer than 10 negative votes to be placed on a “consent calendar.” If an item is not removed by a written request of 20 delegates, and if it does not involve funding or a constitutional amendment, the entire consent calendar is approved with a single vote. General Conference may change the specific rules related to the consent calendar, but the process enables the assembly to quickly deal with hundreds of legislative proposals.
The Commission on General Conference is suggesting that, in the future, individuals should be allowed to submit their petitions only through local church charge conferences or other denominational organizations. A similar request was defeated by the 2004 gathering. The United Methodist Church is the only denomination allowing individuals to petition their legislative assembly.

ISSUES
Major issues facing the delegates include:

FUTURE MEETINGS
Future gatherings of The United Methodist Church’s top legislative assembly could be smaller than the 1,000-delegate conferences of recent decades. The Commission on General Conference is proposing that the number of delegates to the assembly be limited to between 500 and 600. The planning body also wants to allow annual conferences to set term limits for delegates if they choose. If approved, the changes would take effect for the 2012 assembly.

FOUR AREAS OF FOCUS
The Council of Bishops, the top staff executives of the church’s general agencies, and the Connectional Table, a 60-member group responsible for coordinating the mission, ministries and resources of the church, propose four areas of focus for United Methodists at the dawn of the 21st century:

1. Developing principled Christian leaders for the church and the world;
2. Creating new places for new people by starting new congregations and revitalizing existing ones;
3. Engaging in ministry with the poor; and
4. Stamping out killer diseases by improving health globally.

This is a long-term agenda designed to address long-term problems and goals in both the church and the world.

United Methodist officials say the church is approaching a “leadership crisis” of ordained clergy in the United States. A 2006 report revealed fewer than 5 percent of United Methodist elders are under age 35. The churchwide Board of Higher Education and Ministry is leading efforts in this area of focus.

U.S. membership is shrinking at a time when 50 percent of the U.S. population has no
ongoing relationship with a faith community. Since the most effective evangelism is through new churches, the church wants to start 650 new congregations with 63,000 members by 2012 as part of the proposed emphasis on church growth in the United States. The United Methodist Board of Discipleship has created Path One, an office of new congregational development, to lead this effort. Leaders say the goal is eventually to return the denomination to its evangelistic heyday of starting a new church every day.

The denomination has longstanding ministries with people in poverty as well as programs aimed at combating diseases of poverty. United Methodists seek to alleviate poverty as an expression of Christian discipleship and an outgrowth of the Methodist heritage of social action against conditions that are unjust, alienating and disempowering. The churchwide Board of Global Ministries is leading the church’s work on ministry with the poor. Poverty breeds disease, and the church wants to play a significant role in alleviating diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. A Global Health Initiative, housed at United Methodist Communications, has been launched to focus those efforts.

THE BUDGET

Delegates will consider a $642 million spending proposal presented by the General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table. Some $333 million of that total is for the World Service Fund, which supports ministries of nine general agencies (the Board of Pension and Health Benefits and the United Methodist Publishing House do not receive World Service funds).

General agencies submitted expense requests based on current needs and how they would address the four Areas of Focus cited above. While the agencies collectively requested a 16.6 percent increase, the proposal calls for the agencies to receive a 6.55 percent increase.

While delegates will be sensitive to the needs of the global community, they will also be concerned about the abilities of 34,000 local congregations in the U.S. to fund ministries beyond their own communities. The total dollar amount approved by General Conference is apportioned to annual conferences based on a formula that includes: the net expenditures of local churches, including capital expenditures, interest payments, and benevolence giving and a base percentage set by General Conference (around 4 percent in the 2005-2008 quadrennium). The base percentage figure in each annual conference can be raised or lowered based on percentage comparisons of per-capita income in the counties covered by the conference and the total paid by individual church attendees within the conference.
Though the 2009-2012 budget is based on $642 million, financial officials expect to receive only about 87 percent of that amount or $558 million. Only 17 of the church’s 63 U.S. conferences paid 100 percent of their apportionments in 2006.

Total proposals:

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<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>World Service Fund</td>
<td>$333,356,000</td>
<td>up 4.96%</td>
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<td>Ministerial Education Fund:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black College Fund:</td>
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<td>Africa University Fund:</td>
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<td>Episcopal Fund:</td>
<td>$94,400,000</td>
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<td>General Administration Fund:</td>
<td>$36,935,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interdenominational Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>$641,897,000</td>
<td>up 4.8%</td>
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**ABORTION**

The Social Principles states: “Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother, for whom devastating damage may result from an unacceptable pregnancy. In continuity with past Christian teaching, we recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures. We cannot affirm abortion as an acceptable means of birth control, and we unconditionally reject it as a means of gender selection.” In 2000, General Conference declared its opposition to “late-term abortion known as dilation and extraction” and called for the end of this practice “except when the physical life of the mother is in danger and no other medical procedure is available, or in the case of severe fetal anomalies, incompatible with life.”

Four annual conferences will ask the assembly to withdraw the denomination from the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. Other conferences and groups want delegates to support membership in the coalition.
The bishops of The United Methodist Church have adopted statements calling for withdrawing U.S. troops from Iraq and urging nations around the world to develop a plan to help rebuild Iraq and other Middle East nations. At their fall 2007 meeting, the bishops also urged against deploying additional troops to Iraq and against establishing permanent military bases there. In 2005 and 2007 statements, the bishops have noted that the denomination’s *Book of Discipline* declares war “incompatible with the teachings and example of Christ.”

The bishops’ 2005 resolution stated that “the continuing loss of Iraqi civilian lives, especially children, and the increasing death toll among United States and coalition military, grieves the heart of God.” The bishops said the U.S. government’s reasons for war – “the presumption of weapons of mass destruction and alleged connection between al-Qaida and Iraq” – have not been verified, and that the violence in Iraq has created a context for “gross violations of human rights of prisoners of war.” In their 2007 resolution, they called on the United States and other coalition nations to support a plan for rebuilding Iraq, and they urged support for veterans of the Iraq conflict and all wars.

The Board of Church and Society also called on the United States to withdraw its troops from Iraq. “As people of faith, we raise our voice in protest against the tragedy of the unjust war in Iraq,” the resolution stated. “We urge the United States government to develop and implement a plan for the withdrawal of its troops. The U.S. invasion has set in motion a sequence of events which may plunge Iraq into civil war.”

At least two annual conferences are asking General Conference to call upon “the United States to remove all troops as soon as logistically practical and to relinquish all military bases on Iraqi soil.”

Two conferences are calling on the conference to send formal letters of protest to the U.S. president and Congress, urging the government to expeditiously bring all Guantanamo detainees to trial or release them without further delay, and that Congress be urged to rescind the Military Commissions Act of 2006, restoring the writ of habeas corpus to any and all detainees.

At least one annual conference wants General Conference to call for a U.S. Department of Peace and Nonviolence.

One caucus wants the assembly to ask Israel to end its military occupation of the West...
**2008 General Conference Media Guide**

**About the Newsroom**

**Contact Info**

The General Conference Newsroom number, beginning April 23, will be (817) 698-4405.

During General Conference:

* News media queries should be made to Diane Denton, Public Information director for United Methodist Communications, at (615) 483-1765 (cell) or (817) 698-4402, or by e-mail to ddenton@umcom.org.

* Questions about the General Conference Newsroom can be directed to Tim Tanton, director, United Methodist News Service, at (615) 415-0147 (cell) or (817) 6984405, or by e-mail to ttanton@umcom.org.

Before and after General Conference, calls regarding United Methodist News Service can be made at (615) 742-5470, and media calls can be made to Public Information at United Methodist Communications at (615) 742-5406.

**Operating Hours**

The newsroom is in Hall D on the ground floor of the Fort Worth Convention Center. Monday-Saturday hours are 8 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Sunday hours will be posted. The newsroom is a no-smoking area.

**Press Registration and Badges**

The newsroom is reserved for working press only. To be accredited, individuals must show proof that they represent a legitimate publication or news organization and will be filing stories during the conference. Accredited reporters may conduct interviews with delegates and other attendees in the newsroom. The guests are to be accompanied at all times by the reporter.

Registration will begin at 8 a.m. Wednesday, April 23, in the newsroom and continue throughout the conference. Each person registered will receive a badge, which must be worn at all times in order to enter the newsroom, press seating areas and legislative committee meetings.

**Plenary Seating for Reporters**

Seating for accredited reporters in the assembly hall is available in the seating section to the left of the dais, as you face the dais.

Photographers may obtain access to the main floor for up to one hour at a time with an armband provided at the Registration Desk in the newsroom. A limited number of
armbands will be available at any time, so it is important that the one-hour time limit is honored in order for everyone to have a chance to take photos on the floor. United Methodist Communications photographers will also be taking photographs throughout the event for your use (see Photographic Services below).

CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION
Closed-circuit television in the convention center will carry conference proceedings. The newsroom will have several monitors. On the large screen in plenary sessions, the name of the person speaking will be superimposed along with the legislation paragraph number in the Daily Christian Advocate.

NEWS DESK
The News Desk oversees United Methodist News Service’s coverage of the General Conference. It is staffed at all times with people who can assist reporters with background information and other needs. UMNS has a staff person covering each major activity and action of the conference.

Copies of the following resources will be kept at the News Desk: Proceedings from the 2004 General Conference; the Bible, New Revised Standard Version; The 2004 Book of Discipline and The 2004 Book of Resolutions (statements on social, political and moral issues); 2006 edition of The General Minutes (statistical information about church membership, ministerial appointments, etc.); a dictionary, a thesaurus and The Associated Press Stylebook; and the United Methodist Hymnal and the United Methodist Book of Worship.

PUBLIC INFORMATION/MEDIA RELATIONS
The Public Information office, located near the news briefing area, can help reporters with sources and background information. The office also arranges press conferences in the newsroom.

NEWS SERVICE REPORTS
All UMNS stories, photographs, radio reports and TV features are available online at www.gc2008.umc.org. Reporters can make printouts of stories from their computers using a newsroom printer if necessary.

The official General Conference Web site, www.gc2008.umc.org, provides links to general agency petitions, proposals and reports, and a list of delegates, along with the legislative committees to which they are assigned and the paragraphs of the Book of Discipline with which they will work. This same information appears in the Advance Daily Christian Advocate.

MAIL BOXES
Each accredited news organization is assigned a folder for receiving messages and other items. The folders are at the Registration Desk at the entrance to the newsroom. Only newsroom staff will distribute information to the folders. A table near the entrance of the newsroom is designated for printed material from caucuses and special-interest groups.
PHONES/COMPUTER HOOKUPS/FAXES
Reporters are expected to bring their own computers. The newsroom is equipped with printers. The General Conference Newsroom is a largely wireless operation. Reporters can gain access to the system by obtaining a password upon registration. This password is only for media use. A limited number of hard-wired modem lines and phone hookups are available.

Reporters are asked to use their cellular phones when making calls from the newsroom or to charge any land-line calls to their own credit cards. In courtesy for those around you, please set your phones on low volume or vibrate. Fax machines are available in the workroom near the Registration Desk. Please see a newsroom staff person for assistance.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES
UMNS has four photographers covering the General Conference. Photos are available of every major news development related to the conference. The photos are free of charge, and obtaining them is a self-service process. Photos may be viewed and downloaded at www.gc2008.umc.org. Questions or special needs should be directed to the News Desk, not the Photo Team. Hard-copy prints will not be available for delivery during the General Conference.

During plenary sessions, the number of non-staff photographers on the conference floor is limited to five. One-hour passes are available at the Registration Desk on a first-come basis. Please be as unobtrusive as possible while working on the assembly floor.

VIDEO SERVICES
Services, available to accredited press, include:

- Video and audio feed of all plenary sessions.
- Videotape dubs of plenary sessions available for the cost of the tape.

All services must be scheduled in advance. Please contact Harry Leake in Video Services, located in the newsroom, for more information.

VIDEO STREAMING
Key events during General Conference can be viewed online as they happen. Live video streaming will be provided of the Episcopal Address, Laity Address, Young People’s Address, daily morning worship services and other highlights at www.gc2008.umc.org.

UMTV REPORTS
UMTV is producing 90-second, TV-ready stories during General Conference. These stories are provided to news organizations through www.gc2008.umc.org and www.umtv.org. News stations may also request beta dubs at the News Desk. The video reports will be streamed online and posted on the General Conference and UMNS Web pages.
## Radio News

## Printing and Copying
Printers and copiers are available for limited use in the newsroom. For large numbers of copies, you may be referred to a full-service print shop nearby.

### Newsroom Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEWS DESK</th>
<th>Neill Caldwell</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tim Tanton</td>
<td>Ciona Rouse</td>
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<td>Kathy Noble</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Crawford</td>
<td>Fran Walsh</td>
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<td>Diane Maloney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Hickcox</td>
<td>Art McClanahan</td>
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<th>WEB PRODUCTION TEAM LEADER</th>
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<td>Shelia Mayfield</td>
<td>Lane Denson</td>
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<td>Cindy Caldwell</td>
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<td>Ricky Barrow</td>
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<td>Andrew Holt</td>
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<td>David Kim</td>
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<td>Young Joo Kim</td>
<td>Bryan Hooper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>NASHVILLE OFFICE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Carol Terry</td>
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### Annual Conference Videos
- Leslie Alexander

### Photography
- Mike DuBose
- Maile Bradfield
- John Goodwin
- Paul Jeffrey

### Spanish-Language Desk
- Amanda Bachus
- Humberto Casanova

### Korean/Asian-Language Desk
- David Kim
- Young Joo Kim

### Native American Desk
- Anthony Bert

### Media Placement
- Shirley Struchen
- Bryan Hooper

### Nashville Office
- Carol Terry

### Web Production Team Leader
- Shelia Mayfield

### Web Production Editor
- Cindy Caldwell
Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. It also wants delegates to call on Palestinian officials to condemn violence against Israeli civilians.

The Women’s Division wants to press for peace in the Middle East, including security for the state of Israel and justice and sovereignty for the Palestinian people.

SEXUALITY

At least 11 annual conferences want to make clear that no person shall be excluded from membership in The United Methodist Church. The conferences challenge a Judicial Council Decision 1032 that allows clergy the right to decide who will be received into membership.

In November 2005, the Judicial Council supported the Rev. Ed Johnson of South Hill (Va.) United Methodist Church in his decision not to allow a gay man to join his congregation. The man was a choir member and had been meeting with Johnson about transferring membership from another denomination.

Two days after the decision, the Council of Bishops issued a pastoral letter saying homosexuality is not a barrier to membership in The United Methodist Church.

A survey conducted by the Connectional Table found that slightly more than half of clergy and laity at least “agree somewhat” with The United Methodist Church’s position that it does not condone the practice of homosexuality, reflecting split public opinion on the issue in the United States. At the same time, a significant minority—30 percent of clergy and 28 percent of laity “disagree strongly” with the church’s position on the issues.

Sharp disagreements on homosexuality surface among the five regional jurisdictions in the United States.

In the Western Jurisdiction only 28 percent of clergy and 26 percent of laity “agree strongly or somewhat” with the church’s position. Fifty-eight percent of clergy and 53 percent of laity in the West “disagree strongly” with the official position. That compares with the Southeastern Jurisdiction where 66 percent of clergy and 67 percent of laity “agree strongly or somewhat.” Only 17 percent of clergy and 18 percent of laity “disagree strongly.”

Board of Church and Society directors voted 21-17 to ask General Conference to delete the sentence, “The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching” from Paragraph 161G of the 2004 Book of Discipline and replace it with the declaration that “Christians of good faith differ on what Christian teaching reveals regarding
homosexuality.” Last quadrennium a similar request from the Washington, D.C.,-based agency was defeated.

Two annual conferences will ask the assembly to “encourage civil authorities to enact laws that will ensure full civil and economic rights for persons in civil unions and marriages without regard to the gender of partners.

Concerned about pornography on the Internet, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women will ask delegates to approve a resolution on preventing the use and abuse of pornography in the church.

**AIDS**

At least one conference is asking General Conference to recommit to raising funds for the United Methodist Global AIDS Fund during the 2009-2012 quadrennium in the amount of $4 million through Advance gifts.

**BISHOPS**

At least one annual conference wants U.S. bishops to face re-election after eight-year terms. That is currently the practice in the central conferences.

Separately, a task force, created by the 2004 General Conference, has spent the last four years studying all aspects of the episcopacy. The task force will not bring before the 2008 General Conference a comprehensive statement on the episcopacy but will make recommendations and observations that deal with the bishops. In its report to the 2008 General Conference, the task force says that its primary goal was not to bring forth concrete legislation. Instead, it offers recommendations for moving the denomination beyond the current quadrennium to doing studies and explorations that could strengthen the episcopacy and the capacity of the bishops to provide visionary leadership.

The group examined the theological and missional nature of episcopal leadership, the identity and mission of the church, a number of “thinkable and unthinkable ways of re-envisioning episcopacy,” the use of retired bishops, and fiscal and practical concerns, including the length and flexibility of assignments and episcopal workloads.

The task force says that if the General Conference establishes a Committee on Faith and Order, which is being proposed by the Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, the first of the committee’s responsibilities should be a study of the mission, identity and nature of the church, including implications for the episcopacy. The proposed Committee on Faith and Order would provide a venue for ongoing conversation on matters of faith, doctrine, order and
Lift up your heads, 
O gates! 
And be lifted up, 
O ancient 
doors, 
that the 
King of glory 
may come in.
discipline in the church.

The task force is also endorsing a pension plan for central conference bishops, a proposal that will be presented by the Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

THE ENVIRONMENT
Several annual conferences and groups will ask the assembly to call upon the United States to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by increasing fuel efficiency and reliance upon renewable energy resources.

THE GLOBAL CHURCH
A task force dealing with the global nature of the church will propose that the five jurisdictions in the United States become organized as a central conference to deal with national issues. Future editions of *The Book of Discipline* would apply to all central conferences; portions that only apply to the United States would be deleted. Each central conference would publish its own *Book of Discipline* with portions related to that conference.

The assembly will be asked to approve four constitutional amendments that strike out language that says that central conferences are only for areas of the church outside the United States.

If those amendments are approved by two-thirds of the delegates to General Conference and two-thirds of the aggregate number of members attending annual conferences, the way would be cleared for the 2012 General Conference to introduce legislation creating a central conference for U.S. churches. The proposal would allow central conferences to form or continue jurisdictions.

The proposal acknowledges the fact that 30 percent of United Methodist members now live outside the United States and legislation that could be proposed to the 2012 General Conference would eliminate U.S. concerns from General Conference. Those concerns would become the business of a U.S. Central Conference.

The General Conference will be asked to allow the task force and the Connectional Table to jointly continue their study of the church’s worldwide nature and report to the 2012 legislative assembly on the church’s characteristics and how the U.S. could become a regional conference while retaining its five jurisdictions where bishops are elected.

STUDY OF MINISTRY
A study group formed by the 2004 General Conference has issued a 49-page report (available at www.gbhem.org) that makes eight suggestions for reordering the ministry, but the 28-member group will ask General Conference to refer the report back to the committee for four additional years of study.
The group recommends doing away with the practice of commissioning—which it describes as “poorly developed intermediate steps”—and simply ordaining deacons and elders when candidates have met basic requirements. In addition, the commission calls for all current associate members to be eligible for ordination as elder and election as conference member in full connection. The category of associate member would be discontinued. Because nearly one-third of all pastors are presiding over the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion without ordination, the commission proposes expanding the range of those who qualify for ordination as elder.

RACE RELATIONS
The Commission on Religion and Race is trying to involve white members to build an anti-racism movement and to increase the number of ethnic minority persons in the denomination. The commission will also ask the conference to amend the church’s clergy retirement benefits program in an effort to make it more just for racial/ethnic, female and rural clergy who typically receive lower pay in their appointments, especially those serving in low-income churches and communities. The petition would give annual conferences options, including using average compensation or individual compensation, for calculating benefits paid to their retired clergy from the Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

The Women’s Division wants the denomination to work to prevent racial profiling and acts of harassment or violence directed at Muslims, Arabs and those perceived to be Muslims.

IMMIGRATION
Migrant and other farm workers have long been a special concern because they are excluded from many of the economic and social benefits enjoyed by other workers. The Social Principles applaud the efforts of migratory workers to organize and determine their own destinies. The principles call upon governments and all employers to ensure for migratory workers the same economic, educational and social benefits enjoyed by other citizens.

The 2004 General Conference adopted a resolution calling for policies that bring more economic parity between Mexico and the United States. The delegates asked the nations to develop agreements that improve the quality of life; safeguard water rights; and prevent the contamination of air, water, and land on both sides of the border.

Conferences and caucuses will ask the assembly to address concerns of immigrants
that have emerged in the past four years. Some may ask for additional measures to protect borders while others will seek justice for people trying to escape poverty.

At the general church level, representatives from most of the church’s agencies and the Council of Bishops set up an Interagency Task Force on Immigration in 2006 to focus on federal, state and local immigration policy and on education about immigration issues within the denomination.

The Board of Church and Society has submitted a resolution to General Conference calling on United Methodist churches to “advocate for legislation that will uphold the civil and human rights of migrants in the United States and provide legal status for all undocumented migrants for those currently in the United States as well as for those arriving in the future.” The resolution also urges the church to advocate for comprehensive reform of the U.S. immigration system.

Jim Winkler, general secretary of the Board of Church and Society, outlined five elements for comprehensive immigration reform:

- A path to citizenship — an earned legalization program that is workable and achievable.

- Firm, fair enforcement of the law that is consistent with humanitarian values and treats all people with dignity and respect.

- Restoration of due process protections for immigrants removed by the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act.

- Family-based immigration reform that reduces waiting times for family reunification.

- A plan for the future flow of migrants that includes workplace protections and examines the root causes of migration.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

One caucus wants delegates to favor use of embryonic stem cell research from donated embryos that would otherwise be discarded as long as this is done voluntarily. The caucus also supports research into adult stem cells.

SOCIAL CREED

The 2004 United Methodist General Conference designated 2005-2008 as a time of celebration, education and study of the Social Creed and Social Principles leading up to the 100th anniversary of the 1908 Social Creed. The original creed was written as a denominational statement decrying child labor and supporting the economic rights of workers, better workplace conditions, better wages and worker safety.

A task force of the Board of Church and Society has written a contemporary version of the creed to replace a 1972 revision. The task
force aimed to make the creed reflect the global nature of the church. The proposed revision follows the sequence of the Social Principles from the natural community to the world community. Board members have expressed hope that the proposed revision will be set to musical arrangements in a variety of genres and that it will become more widely used by congregations.

The final document was approved at the board’s meeting in September 2007, and the proposed revision is going to General Conference for action.

DIVESTMENT
The Board of Church and Society has adopted a resolution calling for the church to divest itself from Caterpillar Inc., the heavy equipment manufacturer based in Peoria, Ill. The petition states that the company profits from the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and contributes to the occupation by supplying the Israeli Defense Forces with bulldozers and other equipment being used to clear Palestinian land, destroy homes and help erect a separation wall between Israeli and Palestinian areas.

A separate Board of Church and Society petition applies to Sudan, asking that those who invest United Methodist funds divest of all equity and debt holdings in companies doing business with the government of Sudan. The petition is aimed at bringing economic pressure on the Sudanese government in response to the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region.

Focusing on both Sudan and Israel, the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference is petitioning General Conference to "refrain and divest of companies that harm Palestinians and exacerbate the Sudan crisis."

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH
The United Methodist Church was formed in 1968 with the union of the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist Church.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church, established in 1946, represented the union of two U.S.-born denominations: the Evangelical Church and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. These churches originated among German-speaking people during the great spiritual awakening in the late 18th-century colonies.

The two fellowships and the Methodist Church were similar, particularly in terms of church polity and evangelistic zeal.

Jacob Albright of Eastern Pennsylvania was a lay preacher who gathered followers in the early 1800s. These “Albright people” formed the Evangelical Association, later to become the Evangelical Church.
The Rev. Philip Otterbein, ordained by the German Reformed Church, started the United Brethren Movement in the late 1700s. Meanwhile, the Methodist movement had begun in England in the early 1700s, under Anglican clergyman John Wesley and his followers. Wesley did not officially organize a new church but sparked a renewal movement within the Church of England. Nonetheless, Methodism spread from England to Ireland and the colonies in America.

Methodist classes and congregations met in America from the 1760s. Around Christmas 1784, some 60 ministers gathered in Baltimore and organized the Methodist Episcopal Church, with the word “episcopal” referring to the church’s administration by bishops. The denomination grew rapidly and was known for its circuit rider ministers on the advancing U.S. frontiers.

With such growth, philosophical differences and division were inevitable. In 1830, a group, largely moved by an insistence on lay representation, separated and became the Methodist Protestant Church.

In the late 18th century, racism in the church caused some groups of African-American Methodists to leave and form their own denominations, the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. In 1870, another division in the parent church led to the creation of a third black Methodist denomination, known today as the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1844, the Methodist Episcopal Church split again over the issue of slavery. The offspring denomination was the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The north and south churches reunited in 1939, compromising on the race issue by creating a segregated system. The Methodist Protestant Church was part of the merger. Alongside the five geographic jurisdictions, an overlapping Central Jurisdiction was formed for African Americans. It was dissolved in 1968 with the merger of the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren churches.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The U.S. membership of the United Methodist Church has declined since the denomination was formed in 1968, but the worldwide membership is growing, with strong increases in Africa and the Philippines and the establishment of congregations in Russia and Eastern Europe. The most recent figure worldwide is 11.5 million members. Of that number, U.S. members account for about 8 million.

In 1965, the combined Evangelical United Brethren and Methodist membership was 10.3 million.
Oh sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, bless his name.

works among all peoples!
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<td>Retired diaconal ministers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deacons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active bishops</td>
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<td>Active women bishops</td>
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<td>Indian bishop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retired bishops (all nations)</td>
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<td>Organized churches</td>
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<td>Annual conferences</td>
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<td>African-American members</td>
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<td>Hispanic members</td>
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<td>Native American members</td>
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<td>Asian American members</td>
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<td>Pacific Islander members</td>
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<td>Education:</td>
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<td>Two-year colleges</td>
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<td>Four-year colleges</td>
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<td>Universities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional schools</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-collegiate schools</td>
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</table>
# U.S. Lay Membership by Annual Conference

(2005 Statistics from the 2006 General Minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference Name</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Conference Name</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dakotas</td>
<td>42,133</td>
<td>Baltimore-Washington</td>
<td>196,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>102,427</td>
<td>Central Pennsylvania</td>
<td>146,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Ohio</td>
<td>180,463</td>
<td>Eastern Pennsylvania</td>
<td>126,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois Great Rivers</td>
<td>149,003</td>
<td>Greater New Jersey</td>
<td>102,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>193,637</td>
<td>New England</td>
<td>95,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>81,890</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>124,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Indiana</td>
<td>98,292</td>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>77,742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Illinois</td>
<td>107,161</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>124,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Indiana</td>
<td>111,320</td>
<td>Peninsula-Delaware</td>
<td>92,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Michigan</td>
<td>67,894</td>
<td>Troy</td>
<td>51,636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Ohio</td>
<td>230,626</td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>105,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>93,736</td>
<td>Western New York</td>
<td>57,091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1,458,582</td>
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<td>191,593</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jurisdiction</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>63,683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Northeastern</td>
<td>1,432,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jurisdiction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurisdiction</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Jurisdiction</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>138,309</td>
<td>Alabama-West Florida</td>
<td>147,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Texas</td>
<td>160,039</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>321,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas East</td>
<td>74,966</td>
<td>Holston</td>
<td>167,340</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas West</td>
<td>85,796</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>152,193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>126,826</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
<td>88,265</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>173,794</td>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>188,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>83,015</td>
<td>North Alabama</td>
<td>153,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>39,218</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>236,544</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Texas</td>
<td>159,762</td>
<td>North Georgia</td>
<td>341,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Texas</td>
<td>65,772</td>
<td>Red Bird Missionary</td>
<td>1,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>244,880</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>241,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma Indian Missionary</td>
<td>6,237</td>
<td>South Georgia</td>
<td>137,831</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rio Grande</td>
<td>14,468</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>117,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Texas</td>
<td>119,657</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>341,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>283,483</td>
<td>Western North Carolina</td>
<td>293,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central Jurisdiction</td>
<td>1,776,222</td>
<td>Southeastern Jurisdiction</td>
<td>2,931,045</td>
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</table>
United Methodist Central Conference Membership

**Africa**

**Africa Central Conference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Angola</td>
<td>6,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Angola</td>
<td>178,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Africa</td>
<td>94,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>46,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Zimbabwe</td>
<td>22,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Zimbabwe</td>
<td>26,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC TOTAL</td>
<td>374,090</td>
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</table>

**Congo Central Conference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Members</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Congo</td>
<td>76,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Congo</td>
<td>62,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasai Provisional</td>
<td>13,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kivu Provisional</td>
<td>9,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriental and Equator</td>
<td>3,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Congo</td>
<td>5,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Katanga</td>
<td>529,017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanganyika/Tanzania</td>
<td>170,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lukoshi</td>
<td>142,467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
North-West Katanga  62,562
South Congo  65,760
South-West Katanga  76,225
CC TOTAL  1,216,257

West Africa Central Conference
Côte d’Ivoire  677,355
Liberia  102,143
Nigeria  632,317
Sierra Leone  225,000
CC TOTAL  1,636,815
TOTAL, AFRICA  3,227,162

Yugoslavia-Macedonia  3,040
Provisional
CC TOTAL  18,410

Europe
Central and Southern Europe
Central Conference
Austria Provisional  820
Bulgaria Provisional  1,300
Czech and Slovak Republics  1,300
Hungary Provisional  600
Poland  2,500
Switzerland-France  8,850

Germany Central Conference
East Germany  9,567
North Germany  7,228
South Germany  18,105
CC TOTAL  34,900

Northern Europe Central Conference
Denmark  1,268
Estonia  2,628
(inc. Latvia and Lithuania)
Finland-Finnish  689
Provisional
Finland-Swedish  628
Provisional
Norway  4,537
Sweden  3,430
Central Russia  923
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Members</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Russia-</td>
<td>416</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan Provisional</td>
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<tr>
<td>North West Russia Provisional</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Russia-Ukraine-Moldova Provisional</td>
<td>759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central Philippines</td>
<td>4,792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Luzon Philippines</td>
<td>4,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Philippines</td>
<td>14,931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Philippines</td>
<td>7,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Philippines</td>
<td>7,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pangasinan Philippines</td>
<td>8,269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarlac Philippines</td>
<td>6,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicol Mission Philippines</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulacan Philippines</td>
<td>25,895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Philippines</td>
<td>22,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pampango</td>
<td>32,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines East</td>
<td>18,227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines West Middle</td>
<td>15,313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines East Mindanao</td>
<td>2,137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines Mindanao</td>
<td>3,969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines North West Mindanao</td>
<td>1,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines Palawan</td>
<td>970</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philippines Southwest</td>
<td>1,111</td>
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<td>Philippines Total, Southeast Asia</td>
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**Southeast Asia**

**Philippines Central Conference**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Luzon Philippines</td>
<td>7,377</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Central Philippines</td>
<td>4,792</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northeast Luzon Philippines</td>
<td>4,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Philippines</td>
<td>14,931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Philippines</td>
<td>7,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Philippines</td>
<td>7,978</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pangasinan Philippines</td>
<td>8,269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarlac Philippines</td>
<td>6,773</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bicol Mission Philippines</td>
<td>513</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulacan Philippines</td>
<td>25,895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Philippines</td>
<td>22,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pampango</td>
<td>32,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines East</td>
<td>18,227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines West</td>
<td>15,313</td>
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**Grand Total, Southeast Asia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philippines East Mindanao</td>
<td>2,137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines East Mindanao</td>
<td>3,969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines North West Mindanao</td>
<td>1,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines Palawan</td>
<td>970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines Southwest</td>
<td>1,111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines Total, Southeast Asia</td>
<td>201,309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total, Southeast Asia</strong></td>
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</table>

**United Methodist Central Conferences**
## Conference Delegate Distribution

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<th></th>
<th>Clergy</th>
<th>Laity</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeastern</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeastern</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>992</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concordat Churches</th>
<th>Clergy</th>
<th>Laity</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean &amp; the Americas</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concordat Churches Total</td>
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<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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## STRUCTURE OF THE DENOMINATION

**Three Branches:** The United Methodist Church’s legislative branch is its General Conference; Judicial Council is its supreme court. The United Methodist Church has no single general officer or executive, although the Council of Bishops elects a president who serves for two years.

**Local Churches and Districts:** Each congregation in the United States is part of a district, an administrative and program grouping of 40 to 80 churches with a full-time superintendent. Each local church is governed by a charge conference with an administrative board as the year-round supervisor. A council on ministries or an equivalent organization coordinates the program of the congregation. In smaller churches, the board and the council are combined. The denomination has approximately 35,000 organized congregations in the United States and about 6,920 in Africa, Europe and the Philippines.

**Annual Conferences:** Districts are grouped into annual conferences, regional bodies that meet yearly for legislative purposes. Annual conferences approve programming and budget, elect delegates to General and jurisdictional conferences, and examine and recommend candidates for ministry.
The denomination has 63 annual conferences in the United States and 66 in Europe, Africa and the Philippines.

**Jurisdictional and Central Conferences:**
Five geographic jurisdictions (divisions) in the United States include eight to 13 annual conferences each. Jurisdictional conferences meet simultaneously every four years to elect and assign bishops and some members of general church agencies, and, in some cases, to develop jurisdictional programs. Members of the jurisdictional conferences are General Conference delegates from that region, plus additional delegates — an equal number of lay people and ordained ministers — elected by the region’s annual conferences. In Africa, Europe and the Philippines, the comparable geographical division is called a central conference.

**Bishops and Episcopal Areas:** Elected by jurisdictional conferences and assigned or reappointed every four years, bishops are superintendents of their respective areas. The church has 50 active bishops and episcopal areas in the United States and 19 in Africa, Europe and the Philippines. Episcopal areas include one or more annual conferences. The Council of Bishops is the corporate expression of episcopal leadership, which supervises and promotes the temporal and spiritual interests of the entire church.

**General (churchwide) Agencies:** General agencies are similar to U.S. cabinet departments but are primarily accountable to the General Conference rather than to the Council of Bishops. Boards of directors, who are lay and clergy elected jointly by General Conference and regional organizations, govern the agency staffs.

**Judicial Council:** The denomination’s “supreme court” interprets church law and determines constitutionality of proceedings at all levels of church life. Its nine members are elected by General Conference and normally meet twice a year.

**Ecumenical Relationships:** The United Methodist Church is a member of the World Methodist Council, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA and the World Council of Churches. It is also one of nine denominations participating in Churches Uniting in Christ. The United Methodist Church is officially part of a Pan-Methodist Commission looking at cooperation and partnerships with several historically black denominations: the African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Union African Methodist Episcopal and African Union Methodist Protestant churches.
GENERAL AGENCIES OF THE CHURCH

The denomination has 13 general (church-wide) agencies, each governed by a board of directors selected from across the denomination, with attention given to racial, gender, age and lay-clergy balance. Chief staff executives are usually called “general secretaries.”

The Connectional Table coordinates mission, ministries and resources. Organized Jan. 1, 2005, the 60-member group includes people elected by jurisdictional conferences and central conferences, as well as the presidents of the general agencies. Top staff executives of the general agencies have voice, but no vote. President is Bishop John L. Hopkins of North Canton, Ohio; executive secretary is Mary Brooke Casad.
E-mail: casad@umc.org.

The agencies are:

The General Council on Finance and Administration. As the fiscal and record-keeping agency for the denomination, GCFA administers trusts; coordinates and distributes church funds; conducts and analyzes statistical research; and maintains official membership, real property and related records. Headquarters is in Nashville, Tenn. The president is Bishop Mary Ann Swenson of Pasadena, Calif.
E-mail: calpacbishop@earthlink.net. Agency contact: Administration@gcfa.org. Upon the retirement of the general secretary, a search committee is working on a replacement.

The General Board of Church and Society. The social action arm of the denomination, the board addresses issues of global justice – political, human, and economic rights; human welfare; and environmental protection. It is based in Washington, D.C. The president is Bishop Beverly Shamana of West Sacramento, Calif.; the general secretary is James Winkler.
E-mail: jwinkler@umc-gbcs.org.

The General Board of Discipleship. The agency provides training and resources for churches in Christian education, evangelism, devotional life and worship, stewardship and lay ministries. Headquarters is in Nashville, Tenn. The president is Bishop Michael Coyner, Indianapolis; the general secretary is the Rev. Karen Greenwaldt.
E-mail: kgreenwaldt@gbod.org.

The General Board of Global Ministries. The denomination’s largest program agency, the board recruits, trains and deploys missionaries, and educates grass-roots United Methodists about global and national mission concerns. Headquarters is in New York. President is Bishop Joel N. Martinez, San Antonio; the interim general secretary is Bishop Felton E. May.
E-mail: bishopmay@gbgm-umc.org.
The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. The agency oversees ordained ministries, sets criteria for training United Methodist chaplains, coordinates United Methodist campus ministries and oversight of institutions of higher learning and seminaries, and administers loans and scholarships, the Black College Fund and the Ministerial Education Fund. Headquarters is in Nashville, Tenn. President is Bishop Gregory Palmer, Des Moines, Iowa; the general secretary is the Rev. Jerome King del Pino.
E-mail: jkdelpino@gbhem.org.

The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Overseeing $12.8 billion in assets, the agency administers benefit plans for clergy and other church professionals. It is based in Evanston, Ill. The president is Bishop Benjamin Chamness, Fort Worth; the general secretary is Barbara A. Boigegrain.
E-mail: bboigegrain@gbophb.org.

The General Commission on Archives and History. The agency houses historical documents, photographs and other materials of The United Methodist Church and forerunner denominations. It is based at Drew University, Madison, N.J. The president is Bishop Solito Toquero, Philippines; the general secretary is the Rev. Robert Williams.
E-mail: rwilliams@gcah.org.

The General Commission on Communication. The commission oversees United Methodist Communications. Ministries include umc.org, the denomination’s Web site; radio and television services; a toll-free information service; interpretation for church programs and funds; program journals; and a news service. The agency is based in Nashville, Tenn., and has an office in New York. The president is Bishop Thomas Bickerton, Pittsburgh; the general secretary is the Rev. Larry Hollon.
E-mail: lhollon@umcom.org.

The General Commission on Religion and Race. The agency advocates for racial justice and monitors racial/ethnic inclusiveness in church-related institutions and agencies. It is based in Washington D.C. The president is Bishop Linda Lee of Sun Prairie, Wis.; general secretary is Erin Hawkins.
E-mail: EHawkins@gcorr.org.

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. The commission advocates for the empowerment of women and monitors gender inclusiveness in all institutions and agencies of the church. Offices are in Chicago. President is Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor of Columbia, S.C.; general secretary is M. Garlinda Burton.
E-mail: garlinda@gcsrw.org.
The General Commission on United Methodist Men. Created in 1996, the agency coordinates programs and resources for men’s ministries, including scouting, within the denomination. It is headquartered in Nashville, Tenn. President is Gilbert Hanke of Nacogdoches, Texas; general secretary is the Rev. David Adams. E-mail: DAdams@gcumm.org.

The General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. The commission links United Methodists with the ecumenical movement. Offices are in New York. The president is Bishop Ann B. Sherer of Lincoln, Neb.; interim general secretary is Bishop Fritz Mutti. E-mail: fritzmitti@kc.rr.com.

The United Methodist Publishing House. The Publishing House is independent and self-supporting. It does not receive funding through the World Service funding program of the church, as do most other agencies. The agency is based in Nashville, Tenn. Chairperson is William Hatcher of Statesboro, Ga.; president and publisher is Neil Alexander. E-mail: nalexander@umpublishing.org.

ETHNIC INITIATIVES AND ETHNIC CAUCUSES

Asian American Language Ministry
Coordinator: The Rev. Judy Chung, New York City (212) 870-3829; e-mail: judychung@gbgm-umc.org.

Black Methodists For Church Renewal
Interim Director: Pamela J. Crosby, Nashville (615) 749-6351; e-mail: pcrosby@umpublishing.org.

MARCHA (Metodistas Asociados Representando la Causa Hispano/Latino Americana)
Bishop Elias G. Galvan, executive director, Scottsdale, Ariz. (480) 361-6484; e-mail: Galvan222@msn.com.

National Federation of Asian American United Methodists
Executive Director: Ascencion “Inday” Day, Oakland, Calif. (510) 469-7357; e-mail: Indayday01@aol.com.

National Korean American United Methodists Ministries Council
Executive Director: The Rev. Paul Chang, New York City (212) 870-3864; e-mail: pchang@gbgm-umc.org.
National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministries
Coordinator: The Rev. Francisco Cañas,
New York City (212) 870-3693; e-mail: FCanas@gbgm-umc.org.

Native American Comprehensive Plan
Executive Director: The Rev. Anita Phillips,
Tulsa, Okla. (918) 622-4235; e-mail: anita.oimc@gmail.com

Native American International Caucus
Executive Director: vacant
Chairwoman: Anne Marshall,
Holdenville, Okla. (405) 328-0022; e-mail: drannemarshall@hotmail.com.

PINCUM (Pacific Islanders National Caucus of UMC)
Co-chair: The Rev. Eddie Kelemeni,
Honolulu, Hawaii (808) 522-9555; e-mail: EddieKelemeni@hawaii.rr.com.

Strenthening the Black Church for the 21st Century
National Coordinator: Cheryl Stevenson,
Nashville (866) 712-4200; e-mail: cstevenson@gbod.org.

REFERENCE MATERIALS
The Daily Christian Advocate (DCA) is the most important reference tool for General Conference.

Edited by United Methodist Publishing House staff member Marvin Cropsey, it is comparable to the U.S. Congressional Record. An Advance DCA is available before the conference. That volume will be sent prior to General Conference to delegates and subscribers.

One issue of the DCA is published each morning during the 10-day session and placed on delegates’ desks each morning. Final editions with an index will be mailed to the homes of delegates and subscribers after sessions are adjourned.

Representatives of all United Methodist and other church-related publications can order their own DCAs (advance and daily issues) by calling Cokesbury: 1-800-672-1789. Copies of the daily editions will be available for purchase at the Cokesbury booth in the convention center.

The Advance DCA includes all legislative proposals from individuals, local churches, caucuses and general agencies. The volume also contains reports from the study committees and all general agencies.

A Handbook for Delegates includes an alphabetical listing of delegates, legislative committee
assignments, seating assignments and proposed rules of order for the conference.

The *Daily Christian Advocate* contains daily transcripts of the conference proceedings, news stories and features, and daily summaries of legislative committee actions.

*Daily Christian Advocate* prices:

**Advance DCA** (Vol. 1, Sec. 1 and 2): All board and agency reports, plus all legislative proposals organized by committee. (U16-518146; $45)

**Handbook for Delegates** (Vol. 2): Names, addresses and committee assignments for all delegates, plus information about the conference and proposed rules of order. (U16-518493; $10)


**Daily Christian Advocate and Round-up:** Every issue of the *Daily Christian Advocate*, plus the round-up edition. ($55)

The Web site for General Conference, [www.gc2008.umc.org](http://www.gc2008.umc.org), provides links to general agency petitions, proposals and reports; and a list of delegates, along with the legislative committees and paragraphs of *The Book of Discipline* with which they will be dealing. This same information will appear in the *Advance DCA*.

**CROSSING THE LANGUAGE BARRIERS**

The United Methodist Church is a diverse denomination with congregations speaking a variety of languages. Simultaneous voice translation for delegates will be available in English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Swahili, Russian, Korean and Mandarin Chinese, as well as American Sign Language. The *Advance Daily Christian Advocate* will be available in English, Portuguese and French.

**ORGANIZED TOURS**

Day tours offered in and around Fort Worth are inclusive of fees at $30 per person for each tour. Some tours include lunch unless indicated as “on your own.” Check the Tours Stand at the Convention Center for specific information on gathering and departure times.

**Tour #1 Fort Worth’s Cowboy/Pioneer Heritage**

**Friday, April 25, 9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.**

**Cost: $30 per person**

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Fort Worth Stockyards’ National Historic District is a great place to celebrate the romance and mystique of the American West from pioneer days to today. See the daily cattle drive at 11 a.m. or 4 p.m. Shop for
authentic cowboy gear and enjoy lunch on your own at one of the many restaurants in the area serving Texas-style cuisine. After lunch, the tour will move from the stockyards to the National Cowboy of Color Museum and Hall of Fame. There you will discover the diversity and culture of the American West and learn about trailblazers and heroes of color, including the Buffalo Soldiers.

**Tour #2 An Evening Out — Dinner and Rodeo**

**Friday, April 25, 5:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.**

**Cost: $30 per person**

Enjoy dinner at one of Fort Worth’s oldest, most colorful and tasty restaurants. Joe T. Garcia’s Restaurant is well-known for its Tex-Mex ambiance and good food. After dinner, experience the rustic feel of the Old West in the historic stockyards with “Pawnee Bill’s Western Rodeo Show.” There will be two hours of championship performances by Fort Worth’s finest cowboys.

**Tour #3 Shopping Malls**

**Monday, April 28, 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.**

**Cost: $30 per person**

Enjoy the shops at University Parks with such specialty stores as Williams-Sonoma and Pottery Barn, and clothing stores like Talbot’s, Coldwater Creek and Chico’s.

Then dine at locally owned eateries or a national chain before heading to North Fort Worth and Southlake Town Center, a premier shopping and lifestyle destination. Southlake is a planned community between Fort Worth and the DFW airport complex. The town square encompasses 10 city blocks covering 54 acres.

**Tour #4 Cowtown Culture**

**Tuesday, April 29, 10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.**

**Cost: $30 per person**

Explore three museums conveniently clustered in a 1-mile radius. The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth exhibits masterworks of contemporary American and European art from 1945 to the present. The Kimbell Art Museum, considered “America’s Best Small Museum,” offers the finest art in the metropolitan community as well as a buffet lunch. Then it’s a short walk to the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame for a celebration of extraordinary women with inspiring stories of courage and determination.

**Tour #5A Parks and Garden**

**Wednesday, April 30, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.**

**Cost: $30 per person**

The Fort Worth Botanic Garden, the oldest botanic garden in Texas, showcases thousands of native and exotic species of plants in more than 100 acres of gardens and natural
settings. Visit many specialty gardens, including the 10,000-square-foot Conservatory, the Rose Garden, and the 7.5-acre Japanese Garden, a haven of peaceful beauty with waterfalls, pools, and beautiful foliage. Lunch will be provided in the Garden Café.

Tour #5B Parks and Wildlife

Wednesday, April 30, 10:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Cost: $30 per person

The Fort Worth Zoo has been ranked as the No. 1 attraction in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and No. 19 among the “50 Top-Rated Attractions” in the United States by the Zagat Survey U.S. Family Guide. The zoo features winding, tree-shaded paths to lush wildlife exhibits that allow visitors to get close to a variety of wildlife — from primates to parrots, rhinos to raptors. Texas Wild! is an eight-acre exhibit that takes visitors on a journey through the various regions of Texas. A picnic lunch will be provided.

Tour #6 Historical Churches

Thursday, May 1, 9:30 a.m.-Noon.
Cost: $30 per person

Three downtown Fort Worth churches on this tour offer contrasts in architectural design and congregational development. First Christian Church began in 1855 when Abraham Lincoln was still arguing law in Illinois. The current church building, referred to as the “Rock Church,” was erected in 1878 in Roman Empire Renaissance style with a copper-clad dome. After 13 years in a humble wood structure, First United Methodist Church began in 1887 in what was described at the time as a “very imposing structure, having two inspiring spires which reached toward heaven.” Today, this Gothic-style church is a rarity among thriving churches in the 21st century. Lunch will be provided in the quiet Wesley Hall. St. Patrick Catholic Church took form in the late 1880s and remains a beautiful architectural structure with finely detailed interior.

Tour #7 Money, War and Speed

Thursday, May 1, 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Cost: $30 per person

Learn the history of U.S. paper currency and see the production process and its technology at the Bureau of Engraving & Printing Western Currency Facility’s Money Factory Gift Shop. See the largest collection of Civil War artifacts west of the Mississippi at the Texas Civil War Museum — a treasure trove for anyone interested in Texas or Civil War history — with artifacts, Victorian-era dresses, and the largest collection of flags in Texas. Next, experience the thrill of speed with a tour of the Texas Motor Speedway where, for a nominal fee, visitors can drive a race car.

En route to the Speedway, enjoy lunch on your own at a Texas barbecue pit known as Shady Oaks.
Dear Friend,

Grace and peace be with you during this eventful 2008, as we gather for General Conference and other major meetings of the church.

Whether you are a delegate, communicator or interested church member, this guide is designed as a resource for you. As you may have seen in the preceding pages, the General Conference Visitors Guide contains a wealth of information, including an agenda for the assembly, details on the legislative process and summaries of key issues. You will also find information on the denomination’s history and structure as well as membership and financial statistics.

Beyond General Conference, you can use this guide as a reference for communicating about the assembly in your annual conference gatherings and local congregations.

This is an exciting time for The United Methodist Church. Now more than ever, we have a strong sense of what it means to be in a global connection. With that in mind, I am pleased to note that this year we are offering the General Conference Visitors Guide in French and Portuguese as well as English. And, as in years past, it is available as both a published edition and online at www.gc2008.umc.org.

I hope you find this guide helpful as both a resource and a souvenir.

May God bless you in the journey.

The Rev. Larry Hollon
General Secretary
United Methodist Communications