

Petition: To Request a Declaratory Decision on the Meaning, Application, and Effect
of ¶¶16.3, 33, 502.3, and 511.5

WHEREAS, Scriptures teaches, “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you” (Psalm 32:8),

WHEREAS, the Commission on General Conference has published a press release stating that General Conference 2020 cannot be held in 2022, and that there will be General Conference held in 2024 (<https://www.umc.org/en/content/general-conference-further-postponed-to-2024>, last accessed 3/21/2022),

WHEREAS, ¶33 reserves the right of the annual conference to “vote on [...] the election of clergy and lay delegates to the General and Jurisdictional or central conferences” (2016 Book of Discipline),

WHEREAS, under ¶16.3 the General Conference has the authority to “define and fix the powers and duties of the annual conferences” (2016 Book of Discipline),

WHEREAS, the annual conference has the authorization to petition the Judicial Council for a declaratory decision “on matters relating to annual conferences or work therein” under ¶2610.2.j (2016 Book of Discipline),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference request a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council under ¶2610.1 on the meaning, application, and effect of ¶¶16.3, 33, 502.3, and 511.5 as they relate to the election of clergy and lay delegates to the newly announced and scheduled General Conference to be held in 2024. In particular the Judicial Council is asked to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What is the calendar year for the 2024 General Conference, announced by the Commission on General Conference to have its opening session in 2024, as it applies to ¶502.3?
2. Is the annual conference required to hold elections under ¶33 in compliance with ¶502.3?
3. Is the annual conference required under ¶33 to hold new elections if the current delegates were elected prior to 2022?
4. Is the 2020 or is the 2021 statistical report from General Council on Finance and Administration the most recent clergy and professing lay membership figures for calculating the number of delegates to General Conference under ¶511.5?
5. What is the number of delegates to be elected in accordance with ¶502.3 and ¶511.5?

Respectfully submitted,
Western PA General & Jurisdictional Conference Delegation