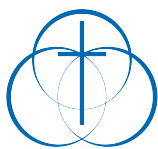




PRE-CONFERENCE FINAL PETITIONS REPORT





GLOBAL
METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Lamar C. Oliver

General Conference Petitions Secretary
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September 2024

Dear Friends:

THANK YOU to everyone who has participated in the Petition Process ("Process") as we have prepared for a time such as this in the grand sweep of the Methodist movement. It has been a joy to work with so many of you as petitioners, co-signers, and interested parties. Looking at all the petitions and the effort that went into these submissions it is evident the people of the GMC are passionate about seeking God's will as we establish this new expression of Christianity in the Wesleyan tradition. I invite you to join me as you digest these pages in hearing the inspiring heartfelt cries of people who love their God and their church and want God's will to be done in this movement.

In this Pre-Conference Petitions Final Report, you will find:

- ❖ An Overview of the Petitions Process (Timeline, Statistics, Petition Committee Members)
- ❖ A Petitions Index by Committee
- ❖ The Official Text of Each Petition (Pagination is Same Across ALL Languages)
- ❖ Petition 110 - The Book of Doctrines & Discipline and the Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules
- ❖ Numerical Index of ALL Petitions Including the Rationale for a Given Petition's Disposition

For this final report, the aim has been pointed towards intentionality in ensuring that the font, spacing, and content are consistent across all languages. This approach was designed to make the report as user-friendly as possible for our upcoming meeting. The hope is our committees and the plenary session will find it helpful as they seek to do their work.

The unique nature of this General Conference means some submitted petitions fell outside the limited agenda. However, it must be noted that final approval of the agenda will be done by the plenary session on day one. The Plan of Organization that has been governing the preparation for this General Conference has provision for the body to, by 2/3 vote, amend the proposed agenda prior to its adoption. Petitions properly submitted and substantiated but deemed not within the limited agenda of the Plan are automatically deferred to the next General Conference unless the plenary session votes otherwise. Additionally, eight petitions were not accepted because the petitioner lacked standing or the petition could not be substantiated.

Understanding this process started from scratch without any precedents as this is the first General Conference of the Global Methodist Church, your graciousness, support and encouragement has made this a deeply rewarding experience. I will eternally be deeply grateful for your patience as we worked through the substantiation, translation, and formatting processes. Your understanding, encouragement, and support have made this work truly life-giving.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam!

Rev. Lamar C. Oliver
General Conference Petitions Secretary

***Our Mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ
who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.***



GLOBAL
METHODIST CHURCH

2024 CONVENING GENERAL CONFERENCE PETITIONS PROCESS OVERVIEW

PETITIONS PROCESS TIMELINE

MARCH 2024	Petitions Process Released
MAY 1, 2024	Petition Submission Portal Opens
MAY 23, 2024	Petition Submission Portal Closes
JUNE 3, 2024	Petition Substantiation Process Opens
JUNE 11, 2024	Petitions Committee Initial Meeting
JUNE 14, 2024	Petition Substantiation Process Closes
JUNE 18, 2024	Petitions Committee Final Meeting
JUNE 28, 2024	Petition Substantiation Process Grace Period Ends
JUNE 30, 2024	Petitioners Notified of Each Petition's Disposition
JULY 2024	Pre-Conference Petitions Update Distributed to GMC Community
AUGUST 2024	Pre-Conference Petitions Report Distributed to GMC Community (English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, & Swahili)
SEPTEMBER 2024	Pre-Conference Petitions Report Distributed to GMC Community (Korean)

PETITIONS STATISTICS

252 TOTAL PETITIONS SUBMITTED

COMMITTEE BREAKDOWN

48	Episcopacy & Superintendency
36	Constitution
35	Ministry & Local Church
27	Connectional Organization
26	Judicial Administration
23	Conferences
6	Finance & Administration
3	Plenary Session

DISPOSITION BREAKDOWN

204	Petitions for Consideration
40	Outside the Limited Agenda
8	Not Accepted

PETITIONS COMMITTEE

Rev. Tom Lambrecht, Chair (Trinity Conference)
Rev. John Pena Auta (Nigeria) • Elizabeth Chryst (Florida)
Norma Morrison (Upper Midwest) • Mike Womack (Great Lakes)

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266	The Celebration of Holy Marriage Petition 202.7
267	The Celebration of Holy Marriage Petition 202.8
268	The Celebration of Holy Marriage Petition 403.1
269	The Celebration of Holy Marriage Petition 704.5

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050	Sexuality
051	Abortion
068	Resurrection Creed
111	The Power and Gifts of the Holy Spirit
122	GMC Vision - Mission - Goals - Objectives - Resources
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256	Transfer of Authority for Health Insurance to Annual Conference — ¶706
265	Amend Potential Transitional Connectional Commissions

*Our Mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ
who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.*

PARAGRAPH	C - 201
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	States the background and purpose of the Constitution.

¶ **201.** From its earliest days, the Christian Church has been marked as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. These four qualities, inseparably joined with one another, bear witness to the origin, nature, and mission of the Church as the Body of Christ called to reflect Christ's Lordship. As those who have experienced the redeeming love of God, the church exists to reflect God's holy and perfect love to all, to boldly proclaim God's Word, to edify all those who believe, and to work for the redemption of the world.

Following in the Methodist tradition of organizing together under a common discipline, the Global Methodist Church has adopted the following Constitution to enable us to "watch over each other in love."

PETITION 021

SECTION ONE — FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

PARAGRAPH	C - 202
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The submitted paragraph sets forth constitutional foundational principles, an essential part of the constitution

¶ 202 SECTION ONE — FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Article I. *Name* — The name of the Church shall be the Global Methodist Church. This name may be translated freely into languages other than English as the General Conference may determine.

Article II. *Doctrinal Foundation* — The doctrines of the Church shall be those embraced within the historic creeds of the church, our Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith, and the core Wesleyan tradition as defined within Part One of this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, with the Holy Scriptures understood to be our primary rule for faith and practice.

Article III. *A Church For All* — All persons are made in God's image and of sacred worth. All are thus welcome within our churches to join with others in the worship of God, to participate in its ministries, and upon repenting of their sin, professing faith in Jesus Christ, being baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and evincing a sincere desire for a holy life, to become members in any local church within the connection.

Article IV. *The Church Universal* — The Global Methodist Church is a part of the greater Body of Christ and we celebrate wherever God is named as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and Jesus is named as Lord. We affirm the validity and value of each expression of the Trinitarian Christian faith that shares that common understanding, and we commit ourselves to work with others for the day when all may be one in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

PARAGRAPH	C - 203
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition sets for the basic organization of the Global Methodist Church from a constitutional perspective.

¶ 203 SECTION TWO — ORGANIZATION

Article V. *The General Conference* — As per the Methodist tradition of “conferring together,” there shall be a General Conference of the Global Methodist Church that shall initially meet for a convening General Conference, then as a General Conference approximately two years thereafter. Subsequently, the General Conference shall meet once every six years. It shall be composed of no fewer than 200 nor more than 700 delegates, one half of whom shall be clergy and one half of whom shall be lay, elected by the annual or regional conferences on a proportional basis as determined by the General Conference. The General Conference may at its discretion include within its number a limited number of delegates, with or without voice and vote, from other autonomous Methodist bodies. A special session of the General Conference to deal with a particular issue or need may be called by a majority vote of the Conference or of its episcopal leadership. Such special session of the General Conference shall be composed of the delegates to the preceding General Conference or their lawful successors.

The General Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters that are distinctly connectional, including, but not limited to:

1. To define the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of those who serve as deacons, elders, other clergy categories, bishops, and other leaders within the Church.
2. To define and establish the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of church membership, which shall be open to all who believe, irrespective of race, color, ethnic or tribal identity, gender, or disability.

-
3. To determine the powers of annual conferences, regional conferences, and other connectional associations, allowing where appropriate each such body to adapt structures that may best maximize their mission.
 4. To determine the boundaries of annual and regional conferences.
 5. To define and establish a Connectional Council with delegated authority from the General Conference to address all matters entrusted to it between meetings of the General Conference subject to such limitations as the General Conference may from time to time impose and subject to ratification of its actions taken between General Conferences by the General Conference.
 6. To establish and give oversight to such general commissions as shall be deemed helpful for strengthening and promoting the mission of the Church through the local church.
 7. To provide for the selection, continuance, and discontinuance of members of the episcopacy, ensuring that bishops are accountable to the Church, and to define and establish an Assembly of Bishops.
 8. To provide for the oversight and/or governance of institutions related to the Church such as hospitals, schools, or other entities.
 9. To determine and administer a program for raising and distributing the funds that are necessary for the work of the Church.
 10. To fix the ratio of representation for the General Conference, based upon the average worship attendance in each annual conference or geographic region of the Church.
 11. To ensure the mission of the Church is kept foremost by all of the ministries, commissions, clergy, laity, and officers of the Church, affirming that disciples of Jesus are made at the level of the local church, and endeavoring to keep as many resources as possible at the local church level.
 12. To approve and revise musical resources and worship rituals of the Church, providing for variations as shall be most helpful to particular contexts worldwide.

13. To provide a judicial system mandating uniform processes and procedures and protecting the rights of all those within the Church.
14. To act upon petitions received dealing with church organization and polity, and resolutions dealing with non-disciplinary matters. In order to effectively speak on behalf of the whole church, resolutions shall require the support of three-quarters of the General Conference and shall remain in effect only until the next General Conference convenes.
15. To adopt or revise a statement of Our Social Witness, provided that such adoption or revision shall require a three-quarters vote of those present and voting.
16. To enact other legislation as it determines to be helpful to the mission of the Church.

Article VII. Annual Conferences — Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability. The Annual Conference shall be composed of clergy, both active and senior, as well as an equal number of lay members elected by each charge or by the district or conference. Each charge shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are appointed clergy.

In addition to coming together for edification, fellowship, and inspiration, the Annual Conference shall be charged with the following responsibilities:

1. To create a program of ministry within its area that can fulfill the mission of the church and enhance its witness, including forming such commissions or agencies as may be required, specifying the composition of each body and electing the members thereof.
2. To determine and administer a program for raising and distributing funds necessary to conduct the work and mission of the Church in its region.
3. To establish the number of districts within the annual conference.
4. To elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference as per the number determined by the General Conference. Clergy delegates shall be members in full connection in good standing who have served in the Global Methodist Church, or its predecessors, a minimum of two years preceding their election. Lay delegates shall have been professing members of the Global Methodist Church, or its predecessors, for at least two years preceding their election. Both clergy and lay delegates

shall be elected by a minimum of fifty percent of votes cast plus one with clergy voting for clergy delegates and laity voting for lay delegates.

5. To vote on all constitutional amendments as approved by the General Conference and distributed to the Annual Conferences for ratification.
6. To approve the ordination of clergy as recommended by the Annual Conference Board of Ministry and approved by the ordained clergy meeting in executive session, and to approve clergy status changes as recommended by the Annual Conference Board of Ministry and approved by the executive session of the ordained clergy.
7. To encourage and facilitate the planting of new churches, including the authorization of sponsorship by existing congregations, and to charter new congregations.
8. To establish minimum standards for parsonages and other ministry housing if desired.
9. To approve by simple majority vote the transfer of a congregation into or out of the Annual Conference to or from another Annual Conference.
10. To maintain the records of the Annual Conference, including the record of closed churches and annual reports from all local churches.
11. To adopt rules for its own governance, provided they do not conflict with the requirements of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

Annual Conferences have no authority to supersede or undermine the decisions of the General Conference.

Article VIII. Regional Conferences — With the approval of the General Conference, regional conferences may be established for the purposes of coordinating and conducting the mission of the Church around the world. The regional conferences shall be composed of clergy and lay delegates in equal number from the annual conferences assigned to a regional conference, as determined by average worship attendance. If a regional conference is established, it shall meet once every six years preceding the General Conference. The General Conference shall specify the duties and responsibilities of regional conferences, which shall include but not be limited to:

1. To promote the mission of the Church in the area of the world in which it is located.
2. To recommend to the General Conference the boundaries of annual conferences within their respective areas.
3. To establish and give oversight to such commissions as may be helpful in the fulfillment of the Church's mission in their area.
4. To give oversight or provide governance to institutions related to the Church such as hospitals, schools, or other such entities within the boundaries of the regional conference.

Regional conferences have no authority to supersede or undermine the decisions of the General Conference.

Article IX. The Episcopacy — The general superintendency of the Global Methodist Church shall be entrusted to bishops who shall provide spiritual leadership to the church and exercise temporal authority as adopted by the General Conference. Bishops shall be elected as per the procedures established by the General Conference and shall serve at its pleasure to guard the faith, order, unity, liturgy, doctrine and discipline of the Church.

Article X. The Judiciary — The General Conference shall create a Connectional Council of Appeals, determining the number, terms, and qualifications of its members, as well as their method of election and the filling of any vacancies. All decisions of the Council shall be final.

The Council shall have the authority and responsibility:

1. To determine the constitutionality or the meaning, application, or effect of any action or decision of the General Conference upon an appeal of one-fifth of the members of that Conference present and voting, or upon a majority of the active episcopal leaders of the church.
2. To determine the constitutionality or the meaning, application, or effect of any action or decision of an Annual or Regional Conference upon an appeal of one-fifth of the members present and voting of that conference.

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3. To review and affirm, modify, or reverse any decision of law made by any bishop.
 4. To act upon any petition for appeal seeking a ruling on the constitutionality, meaning, application, or effect of any provision in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* to any action taken by the General Conference, any of its regional or annual conferences, or commissions created or authorized by the General, Regional, or Annual Conferences when such petition is granted by the Council.
 5. To provide for its own methods of organization and procedure.
 6. To fulfill such duties in the service of the Church as determined by the General Conference.

Article XI. Right of Appeal — The General Conference shall establish for the Church a judicial system that shall guarantee to our clergy and our members a right to trial and appeal.

PETITION 023

SECTION THREE — THE RESTRICTIVE RULE AND AMENDMENTS

PARAGRAPH C - 204

COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition sets for the historic restrictive rule protection the doctrinal foundations of the Global Methodist Church and the process for amending the constitution.

¶ 204 SECTION THREE — THE RESTRICTIVE RULE AND AMENDMENTS

Article XII. *The Restrictive Rule* — In continuity with the Wesleyan tradition and historic expressions of Methodism, the following is adopted as a restrictive rule which may be changed only by a three-fourths vote of the General Conference, followed by the ratification of three-fourths of the membership in the annual conferences world-wide.

The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our doctrinal foundations as established by the Church and embodied within our normative standards, or establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to such standards. This restrictive rule shall not apply to the development of a combined Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith as approved by the church. Any successor document to the Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith shall be adopted by a three-fourths vote the members of the General Conference present and voting and thereafter be covered by this restrictive rule.

Article XIII. *Amendments* — Amendments to the Constitution may originate in the General Conference, a regional conference, or an Annual Conference. Except in the case of the Restrictive Rule which shall require a three-fourths majority of those members present and voting of both the General Conference and the Annual Conferences, amendments shall be made upon a two-thirds majority of the General Conference present and voting, followed by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members of the Annual Conferences present and voting. Following its ratification, the amendment voted upon shall become effective upon the announcement of its approval. Where appropriate, the General Conference may choose to enact enabling legislation for an amendment that shall be contingent upon the ratification of the amendment by the required vote of the General Conference and the annual conferences.

PARAGRAPH 705.2

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER REV. DAVID DANIEL - ARDMORE, OK

ORGANIZATION HEARTLAND

RATIONALE We have been blessed to have a United Methodist book of Worship since 1992. As a new Wesleyan denomination, it is important that we have the proper liturgy and worship services as Christians in the Global Methodist Church. A Global Methodist Book of Worship is proper and appropriate for each Global Methodist church and pastor.

As followers of Christ in the Global Methodist Denomination, we are a people that are called to “*make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.*” My petition is that to fulfill the portion of our mission statement “*who worship passionately*” that it is imperative that we create for our congregations and clergy a Global Methodist Book of Worship.

In paragraph 705.2 Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry — including, but not limited to, encouraging growth in discipleship through small groups; proposing liturgies and orders of worship for use by both local congregations and the general church for General Conference approval; resourcing understanding of our doctrines; and resourcing local churches in engaging with the church’s social witness and social issues from a variety of political perspectives and from a biblical foundation.

Our history as Methodists is deep and distinct when it comes to having a book of worship that would help us the appropriate liturgies and worship services for our congregations. I petition that the convening conference would appoint a group of laity and clergy who are Global Methodist to begin the creation of a Book of Worship that would be approved at the 2026 Global Methodist General Conference.

PARAGRAPH	501
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The entirety of Part Five of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline is being replaced to give expression to an understanding of superintendency unique to the Global Methodist Church. Proposed edited paragraph 501 sets forth the historical context of the superintendency and how the nature of superintendency is expressed in the Global Methodist Church.

AMENDED PARAGRAPH 501 – THE NATURE OF SUPERINTENDENCY

¶ 501. THE NATURE OF SUPERINTENDENCY. From apostolic times, certain ~~ordained~~ persons have been set apart and entrusted with the task of defending the Apostolic faith and ~~overseeing and leading the church's in its mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ and to spread scriptural holiness across the world~~ (¶301). While shared by the whole people of God, this apostolic task is most clearly expressed in the historic office of the *episkopos* (meaning overseer or bishop). ~~The Global Methodist Church is led, equipped, and supervised by an episcopacy modeled after that of the early centuries of Christianity and stemming from the historic line of Methodist bishops.~~

Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, the first Methodist bishops, exemplified an evangelistic and missionary spirit that we trust will be shared by every bishop in the Global Methodist Church. The Global Methodist Church is led, equipped, and supervised by an episcopacy modeled after that of the early centuries of Christianity and stemming from the historic line of Methodist bishops.

We share John Wesley's conviction that bishops and elders are ~~part~~ expressions of the same New Testament order. Therefore, bishops in the Global Methodist Church represent a specialized ministry rather than a separate order and are consecrated rather than ordained to their office.

The role of bishop is a sacred trust held for a time as the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of our church allows. It is not a lifelong office.

~~Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, the first Methodist bishops in America, exemplified an evangelistic and missionary spirit that we trust will be shared by every bishop in the Global Methodist Church. The episcopal office is to keep us relentlessly the church focused outward toward our mission field. Our bishops must not lean on the trappings of ecclesial office but lead us from an authentic, humble, and evangelistic love for God and neighbor.~~

~~The bishop's primary place of servant leadership shall be to an annual conference or conferences of our church. When convened together, the bishops of the Global Methodist Church ~~comprise~~ constitute a general superintendency that leads our church in spiritual and temporal matters. The call to order the church extends beyond the episcopacy to conference superintendents, presiding elders, and elders who each possess distinct and collegial responsibilities. In addition to residing in the office of bishop, the task of superintending in the Global Methodist Church extends to the presiding elder (district superintendent), with each possessing distinct and collegial responsibilities.~~

PARAGRAPH	502
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The language of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline is modified for clarity and simplicity of expression.

Section I. The Office of Bishop

¶ 502. ROLE AND QUALIFICATIONS. Bishops are elected from among those within the order of elders and set apart for a ministry of visionary servant leadership, general oversight, and supervision in support of the Church in its mission. As followers of Jesus Christ, bishops are charged with guarding the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Church. The basis of such discipleship of leadership lies in a life characterized by personal integrity, ~~spiritual disciplines~~ rigorous discipleship, and the anointing and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Bishops shall be persons of genuine faith, and ~~and~~ upstanding moral character, ~~and They should possess the gift of encouragement, a vital and renewing spirit, and a commitment to the possess an engaging vision for of the eChurch adopted by the General Conference.~~ Candidates for the episcopacy should also have a strong record of effectiveness in leading the church in evangelism, discipleship, and mission; and Bishops shall be unwaveringly committed to uphold the doctrines and polity of our church, and ~~able and committed to effectively teach and communicate the historic Christian faith from a Wesleyan perspective. (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3; 1 Timothy 3:1-7)~~

PARAGRAPH	503
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Clarifies and adds additional general responsibilities for bishops consistent with the vision for the superintendency in the Global Methodist Church.

¶ 503. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES. As general superintendents of the Church, bishops are entrusted with the following responsibilities:

1. Lead and oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Global Methodist Church which confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and particularly to lead the Church in its mission of witness and service in the world.
2. Guard, transmit, teach, and proclaim, corporately and individually, the apostolic faith as it is expressed in Scripture and ~~tradition~~ and understood from a Wesleyan perspective.
3. Reclaim and exercise the historic teaching office of the episcopacy by grounding the church in the Faith once delivered (Jude 3) and train lay and clergy leaders to apply our theology the challenges and opportunities of the present age.
34. Defend, communicate, uphold and enforce the order, doctrines, and disciplines of the church as provided for in ~~the this Transitional~~ *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*.
45. Preside in the General, regional, and annual conferences as assigned.
6. Appoint conference superintendents to the annual conferences.
7. Fix the clergy appointments in each conference in consultation with the conference superintendents and conference cabinet.

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- ~~58.~~ Consecrate bishops; ordain elders and deacons; and commission missionaries; entering the names of those individuals into the appropriate records and furnishing proper credentials to each. As these services are acts of the whole Church, text and rubrics shall be used in the form approved by the General Conference.
- ~~69.~~ Promote, support, and model generous Christian giving, with special attention to teaching the biblical principles of giving.
- ~~710.~~ Provide ~~liaison and~~ leadership in the quest for Christian unity in ministry and mission and in the search for strengthened relationships with other living-faith Christian communities.
- ~~811.~~ Promote and support the evangelistic witness of the whole Church.
- ~~912.~~ Travel through the connection at large to implement the missional strategy of the Global Methodist Church and to foster relationships ~~with other areas of the~~ among various parts of the connection.

PARAGRAPH 504

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Paragraph 504 of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline is deleted in its entirety because the specific responsibilities assume that each bishop will be residential in an episcopal or annual conference area. However, these specific responsibilities will largely be performed by conference superintendents whose responsibilities are addressed elsewhere.

¶ 504. SPECIFIC RESIDENTIAL DUTIES. Within the life of the annual conference to which they are assigned, bishops are entrusted with the following responsibilities:

1. — Work with annual conference leaders to set vision and build a clear and articulated missional strategy for the conference. This strategy should include action plans and benchmarks aimed at advancing the Kingdom of Christ through initiatives related to establishing new faith communities, growing vital congregations, making mature disciples of Jesus Christ, and serving in ministries of justice and mercy.
2. — Encourage, inspire and motivate the clergy, laity, and churches of the annual conference to embrace and implement the vision and missional strategy of the annual conference, as well as the vision and mission of the Global Methodist Church.
3. — Strengthen the local churches, giving spiritual leadership to both laity and clergy, and to build relationships with people of local congregations of the episcopal area.
4. — Provide general oversight for the fiscal and program operations of the annual conference(s). This oversight may include special inquiry into the work of annual conference committees and agencies to ensure that the provisions of the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and annual conference and general church policies and procedures are followed.
5. — Ensure fair process for clergy and laity in all involuntary administrative and judicial proceedings through monitoring the performance of annual conference officials, boards, and committees charged with implementing such procedures (see Part Nine).
6. — Form the districts after consultation with the presiding elders (district superintendents) and after a vote of the annual conference has determined the number of districts.

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7. ~~Appoint the presiding elders (district superintendents). To convene together and supervise the presiding elders (district superintendents) and conference officers, which shall constitute the cabinet of the annual conference (¶ 507).~~
 8. ~~Make and fix the appointments in the annual conferences as the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* directs (¶ 508-513).~~
 9. ~~Divide or to unite a circuit(s), station(s), or mission(s) as judged necessary for missional strategy and then to make appropriate appointments.~~
 10. ~~Transfer, upon the request of the receiving bishop, clergy member(s) of one annual conference to another, provided said member(s) agrees to said transfer; and to send immediately to the secretaries of both conferences involved, to the conference Boards of Ministry, and to Transitional Leadership Council or its designee, written notices of the transfer of members.~~
 11. ~~Ensure that an appropriate personnel and supervisory record is kept and maintained on all clergy members as required by the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or action of the annual conference or bishop. There shall be only one file maintained for each member, containing both personnel and supervisory information. Clergy shall have access to the entirety of their file and shall have the right to add a response to any information contained therein.~~
 12. ~~Discharge such other duties as the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* may direct.~~

PARAGRAPH 504
COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE A method of electing bishops beginning in 2026 is set forth.

¶ 504. ELECTION OF BISHOPS.

Bishops of the Global Methodist Church are elected by the General Conference. With the 2026 General Conference, bishops shall be elected according to the following process:

1. The General Committee on Episcopacy shall recommend the number of bishops to be elected by each General Conference.
2. A bishop may serve a maximum of two six-year terms, except that Bishops Scott J. Jones and Mark J. Webb shall be permitted to stand for election at the 2026 General Conference and those persons elected as interim bishops at the 2024 Convening General Conference other than Bishops Jones and Webb shall only be permitted to stand for election at the 2026 General Conference if each such person receives a two-thirds majority vote of delegates present and casting ballots affirming the person's inclusion in the episcopal election process at the 2026 General Conference.
3. Annual conferences and/or their delegations are invited to endorse up to one candidate from their conference and up to one candidate from another conference. After the 2026 General Conference, such endorsements will not normally be extended to bishops already in office who may be eligible for a second term.
4. The General Committee on Episcopacy is charged with developing the plan to identify nominees for the episcopacy from the whole church. The committee is to produce a vetted slate containing not fewer than twice the recommended number of bishops. This slate is to reflect the rich diversity of our movement as much as possible. The nominating process is to be published not less than twelve months before each General Conference.

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- a. No member of the Committee on Episcopacy shall be eligible for nomination or election during their term of service on the committee.
 - b. The General Committee on Episcopacy shall sponsor whatever forums they deem appropriate to assist the General Conference in the election process.
 - c. Active bishops eligible for an additional term who wish to continue in office shall be automatically included as nominees (except as described in ¶ 504.2).
 - d. Information on each candidate shall be made available to delegates to the General Conference at least sixty days prior to the opening of General Conference.
5. There shall be a prayerful balloting process for the election of bishops at General Conference. The Commission on General Conference shall provide for presiding officers not included on the ballot. At least sixty percent support, plus one vote, shall be required for election.
6. Those elected to the office of bishop shall be consecrated at General Conference according to the historic manner.
7. The General Committee on Episcopacy shall assign the bishops to episcopal areas as best meets the missional needs of the church.
8. The actual term of service for bishops begins sixty days following the close of the General Conference at which bishops are consecrated, unless determined otherwise by the General Conference.

PARAGRAPH 505

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The entirety of paragraph 505 of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline is deleted. Compensation of bishops elected at the 2026 General Conference will be addressed by petition to that General Conference. Compensation of Interim Bishops elected at the 2024 convening general conference will be addressed by separate legislative proposal.

¶ 505. COMPENSATION AND SALARY UNIT.

1. ~~The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, and travel and office expenses for bishops serving within the United States shall lie with the annual conference(s) to which he or she has been assigned. Bishops will be considered as employees of their respective annual conference(s). The Transitional Leadership Council will establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living and the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area.~~
2. ~~The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, and travel and office expenses for bishops serving in an episcopal area outside of the United States shall be borne by the general church through partnerships with U.S. annual conferences, though such bishops shall be considered employees of some entity within their episcopal area. The Transitional Leadership Council will establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living, the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area, and the currency exchange rate.~~
3. ~~Each episcopal area within the United States shall partner with one or more episcopal areas elsewhere in the world to provide the necessary funds for the episcopal office within those areas. Such funds will be raised in the U.S. and passed through the general church, designated for that episcopal area. The Transitional Leadership Council shall arrange such partnerships based on the financial resources any given U.S. conference can reasonably provide. Where partnerships do not provide adequate resources to cover the episcopal office costs, general church connectional funding may be used to fund episcopal costs as needed.~~
4. ~~Costs for episcopal travel outside the episcopal area on behalf of the general church, (e.g., Council of Bishops meetings) shall be paid out of general church funds, not conference partnership funds.~~

PARAGRAPH	505
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Legislation creates a General Committee on Episcopacy for the Global Methodist Church.

Section II.

The General Committee on Episcopacy

¶ 505. THE GENERAL COMMITTEE ON EPISCOPACY. There shall be a General Committee on Episcopacy consisting of twelve members elected by the General Conference.

1. The Connectional Council shall receive nominations of persons to serve on the General Committee on Episcopacy and produce a slate of six lay and six clergy nominees diverse with respect to geography, ethnicity, and gender which shall be released publicly thirty days before the General Conference. Delegates to the General Conference may nominate additional persons from the floor. All nominees, with their consent, shall be included in a balloting process to elect six lay and six clergy members. All delegates shall be empowered to vote for both lay and clergy nominees. A minimum of sixty percent support plus one vote of delegates present and casting valid ballots shall be required for election. No one may serve more than two consecutive six-year terms. Following the conclusion of the election, the Connectional Council may add two additional clergy members and two additional lay members to the General Committee on Episcopacy to ensure diversity.
2. The General Committee on Episcopacy shall determine and elect its own officers. The Connectional Operating Officer shall chair the meeting at which such officers are elected.
3. If a member of the General Committee on Episcopacy is elected to serve as a bishop of the Church, that member's service on the General Committee shall terminate upon election to the episcopacy. The remaining members of the General Committee on Episcopacy shall elect a clergy person to serve the remainder of that person's term.

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4. While those elected shall begin their term sixty days following the close of the General Conference session at which they are elected, those selected may participate with voice (not vote) in any sessions of the Committee on Episcopacy held between their selection and their term of service. Those elected in 2024 begin service upon election.
5. The General Committee on Episcopacy shall meet at least semiannually to fulfill the following responsibilities:
- a. To foster a healthy and effective episcopacy in the Global Methodist Church.
 - b. To communicate the work, needs, expectations, and challenges of the episcopacy to the church.
 - c. To evaluate each active bishop annually using a process that includes input from the bishop's assigned area.
 - d. To guide the nomination process for new bishops as described in ¶ 504.
 - e. To approve sabbaticals, resignations, and other leaves of duty for bishops.
 - f. To receive and investigate complaints against bishops. The committee shall be empowered to suspend a bishop, arrange for responses aimed at resolution and, as necessary, provide for a trial for a bishop in keeping with the *Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules of the Global Methodist Church*.
 - g. To establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living, the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area, and the currency exchange rate. The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, and travel and office expenses for bishops shall be borne by the general church. The General Committee on Episcopacy shall adhere to the limits of the general budget.
 - h. To develop a proposal for the shared expense for bishops to be brought to each General Conference in collaboration with the Connectional Operations Officer.

PARAGRAPH	506
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Creates the collective expression of the episcopacy where all active bishops meet together.

Section III.

The Assembly of Bishops

¶ 506. THE ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS.

By virtue of their election and consecration, bishops, including interim bishops, are members of the Assembly of Bishops and are bound together in special covenant. As the collegial expression of episcopal leadership, the Assembly of Bishops speaks pastorally to the church and from the church to the world. The Assembly of Bishops is composed of all active bishops and shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Provide a faith community of mutual trust, concern, and accountability which results in the sanctification and well-being of its members.
2. Watch over one another in love, in cooperation and consultation with the General Committee on Episcopacy.
3. Plan for the growth, vitality, and extension of the church.
4. Organize the assembly as deemed most helpful to the mission of the church.
5. Issue teaching documents as may correct errors, provide theological and moral guidance, and deepen faith.
6. Exercise temporal leadership as defined by *The Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.
7. Ensure effective consultation in the appointment process.

PETITION 032

1506 — (NEW) THE ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS

(PAGE 2 OF 2)

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8. Develop and administer plans of resolution when complaints against bishops are referred to the Assembly of Bishops by the General Committee on the Episcopacy.
 9. Designate trained and qualified persons to preside over church trials as described in *The Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules of the Global Methodist Church*.
 10. Nominate the Connectional Operation Officer to be elected by the Connectional Council.
 11. Lead the ecumenical work of the Global Methodist Church and shepherd the Church toward greater unity.

PARAGRAPH	507
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Creates the office of Conference Superintendent (replacing existing presidents pro tem) to provide spiritual and temporal leadership for each annual conference.

SECTION IV.

Conference Superintendents

¶ 507. CONFERENCE SUPERINTENDENTS. Conference superintendents are elders who are appointed by the bishop, after consultation with the annual conference connectional council or equivalent and affirmation by the annual conference, to provide spiritual and temporal leadership to each annual conference. By vote of the annual conferences involved, two or more conferences may agree to be led by a single conference superintendent. Conference superintendents serve an initial term of six years and may be extended annually for up to twelve total years of service.

1. A conference superintendent shall have the following responsibilities:
 - a. Collaborate with annual conference leaders to set vision and build a clear and articulated missional strategy for the conference in keeping with the vision and mission of the Global Methodist Church.
 - b. Encourage, inspire, and motivate the clergy, laity, and churches of the annual conference to embrace and implement the vision and missional strategy of the annual conference.
 - c. Strengthen and multiply local churches, providing spiritual leadership to both laity and clergy.
 - d. Provide general oversight for the fiscal and program operations of the annual conference(s).

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- e. Ensure fair process for clergy and laity in administrative and judicial proceedings.
 - f. Form the districts (or equivalent) after consultation with the presiding elders and bishop.
 - g. Recommend the presiding elders for appointment by the bishop.
 - h. Convene together and supervise the cabinet of the annual conference.
 - i. In consultation with the presiding elders, present appointments in the annual conference(s) to be fixed and approved by the bishop as *The Book of Doctrines and Discipline* directs (¶ 510).
 - j. Divide or unite circuits, charges, stations, or missions as judged necessary and to recommend appropriate appointments.
 - k. Transfer, upon the request of the receiving conference superintendent, clergy member(s) of one annual conference to another, provided said member(s) agrees to said transfer; and to send to the secretaries of both conferences involved and to the conference Boards of Ministry timely written notices of the transfer of members.
 - l. Ensure that an appropriate personnel and supervisory record is kept and maintained on each clergy member as required. There shall be only one file maintained for each member, containing both personnel and supervisory information. Clergy shall have access to the entirety of their file and shall have the right to add a response to any information contained therein.
 - m. Chair the conference leadership team (or equivalent) as provided in the established rules of the conference.
 - n. After consultation with the Board of Ministry chair and the presiding elders, the conference superintendent shall nominate clergy and laity to serve on the Board of Ministry.

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- o. Nominate the committee on investigation and committee on administrative review per the *Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules of the Global Methodist Church*.
 - p. Represent the bishop in his/her absence as assigned.
 - q. Discharge such other duties as *The Book of Doctrines and Discipline* may direct.
2. There may be a conference committee on superintendency elected to foster a healthy relationship between the conference and conference superintendent. Each conference superintendent shall be evaluated annually in a process approved by the bishop.

PETITION 034

¶508 — (NEW) SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT OF PRESIDING ELDERS

PARAGRAPH	508
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The existing position of presiding elder is addressed within the new expression of the superintendency.

Section ~~IV~~. The Office of Presiding Elders (~~District Superintendents~~)

¶ 5068. SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT OF PRESIDING ELDERS.

- 1.——Presiding elders (~~district superintendents~~) ~~are elders~~ An elder in full connection may be appointed to lead a district (or its equivalent) by the bishop as a presiding elder upon recommendation by the conference superintendent. A presiding elder is appointed annually after evaluation for effectiveness. A presiding elder may not serve more than twelve years in the aggregate unless the delegates to the district conference to which he or she is to be appointed affirm such an appointment by majority vote of the delegates present who cast ballots. ~~to the cabinet as an extension of the superintending role of the bishop within the annual conference. They serve at the bishop's pleasure and for a specific term of years to be determined by the convening conference. In instances where a new provisional annual conference is formed, the bishop shall consult with clergy and lay leaders of the provisional conference for the purpose of selecting presiding elders (district superintendents).~~
- 2.——In the selection of presiding elders (~~district superintendents~~), bishops and conference superintendents shall give due consideration to the inclusiveness of the Global Methodist Church (¶ 306).

PARAGRAPH	509
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The existing position of presiding elder is addressed within the new expression of the superintendency.

¶ 5079. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRESIDING ELDERS.

1. As an extension of the office of bishop and conference superintendent, the presiding elder (~~district superintendent~~) shall oversee the ~~total~~ ministry of the clergy and churches in the communities of the district to which they are appointed. ~~in their missions of witness and service in the world~~. The presiding elder (~~district superintendent~~) is the acting administrator of any pastoral charge in which a pastoral vacancy may develop, or where no pastor is appointed. ~~As such, t~~The presiding elder (~~district superintendent~~) has the following specific responsibilities:
1. Offer support, care, and counsel to churches and clergy concerning matters affecting their ministry.
 2. Together with the bishop, guard, transmit, and proclaim the apostolic faith as it is expressed in Scripture and Tradition from a Wesleyan perspective, communicating and defending the doctrines and discipline of the church as provided for in *The Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.
 23. Be the district's chief missional strategist providing missional accountability, collaborating with congregations and communities within the district to assess and understand their context and develop their leadership needs. ~~of the district and be committed to living out the values of the Church, including a mandate of inclusiveness; model, teach, and promote generous Christian giving; cooperate in developing Christian unity, and ecumenical, multicultural, multiracial, and cooperative ministries; and work with persons across the Church to develop programs of ministry and mission that extend the witness of Christ into the world.~~

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23. Be the district's chief missional strategist providing missional accountability, collaborating with congregations and communities within the district to assess and understand their context and develop their leadership needs. of the district and be committed to living out the values of the Church, including a mandate of inclusiveness; model, teach, and promote generous Christian giving; cooperate in developing Christian unity, and ecumenical, multicultural, multiracial, and cooperative ministries; and work with persons across the Church to develop programs of ministry and mission that extend the witness of Christ into the world.
3. ~~Along with the bishop, guard, transmit, teach, and proclaim, corporately and individually, the apostolic faith as it is expressed in Scripture and tradition from a Wesleyan perspective, communicating and defending the doctrines and discipline of the church as provided for in this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.~~
4. ~~Work~~ Collaborate with the bishop, conference superintendent, and cabinet in the process of appointing and assigning for ordained clergy, ~~or assignment of~~ and qualified and trained lay ministers.
5. ~~Work to d~~ Develop an effective and functioning system for recruitment of candidates for ordained ministry.
6. Establish working relationships with ~~pastor-parish relations committees, clergy, district lay leaders, and other lay leadership,~~ to develop faithful and effective systems of ministry within the district.
7. ~~Serve as an example of spiritual leadership by living a balanced and faithful life, and by encouraging both laity and clergy to continue to grow in spiritual formation.~~
8. ~~Offer support, care, and counsel to clergy concerning matters affecting their effective ministry.~~
97. Encourage the ~~building of~~ covenant groups, class meetings, and band meetings and communities among both the clergy and clergy families, and the laity ~~on~~ the district.
108. Maintain regular contact with the clergy ~~on the district~~ for counsel and supervision and receive written or electronic evaluations ~~reports of each clergy person's which include each appointed clergy or assigned layperson's~~ continuing education, spiritual practices, current ministry work, and goals for future ministry.

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- ~~119.~~ Maintain the appropriate records of all ~~clergy~~ persons appointed ~~to or related~~ to the charges, including clergy in extension ministries on the district (including clergy in extension ministry and ministry beyond the local church), as well as records dealing with property, endowments, and other tangible assets of the Global Methodist Church within the district.
- ~~10.~~ Maintain appropriate records dealing with property, endowments, and other tangible assets of the district.
- ~~121.~~ In consultation with the bishop and cabinet, work to develop the best strategic deployment of clergy possible in the district, including realignment of pastoral charges ~~when needed, and the exploration of larger parishes, cooperative parishes, multiple staff configurations, new faith communities church starts, and ecumenical shared ministries.~~
- ~~12.~~ Assume other leadership responsibilities as determined by the conference superintendent and/or bishop for
- ~~13.~~ Interpret and decide all questions of Church law and discipline raised by the churches in the district, subject to review by the resident bishop of the annual conference.
- ~~14.~~ Serve at the pleasure of the bishop and assume other leadership responsibilities as the bishop determines for the health and effectiveness of the local churches in the district and/or annual conference.

PARAGRAPH 508

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Paragraph is no longer necessary.

¶ 508. THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE CABINET.

1. — ~~Presiding elders (district superintendents), although assigned to districts, also have conference-wide responsibilities. As all ordained ministers are first elected into membership of an annual conference and subsequently appointed to pastoral charges, so presiding elders (district superintendents) become through their selection members first of a cabinet before they are subsequently assigned by the bishop to service in districts.~~
2. — ~~The cabinet under the leadership of the bishop is the expression of superintending leadership in and through the annual conference. It is expected to speak to the conference and for the conference to the spiritual and temporal issues that exist within the region encompassed by the conference.~~
3. — ~~The cabinet is to consult and plan with the conference in order to make a thorough analysis of the needs of the conference for clergy, implementing this planning with a positive and conscious effort to fill these needs.~~
4. — ~~When the cabinet considers matters relating to coordination, implementation, or administration of the conference program, and other matters as the cabinet may determine, the conference lay leader and other conference staff as appropriate shall be invited to be present.~~

PARAGRAPH 509
COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE Paragraph replaced by new paragraph 510.

¶ 509. CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPOINTMENTS.

1. — ~~Prior to the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church, it is expected that the appointments of clergy serving congregations in which both transition into the Global Methodist Church will be retained, unless a change is needed because of illness, family situation, death, the election of senior status, clergy misconduct, or the financial exigencies of the congregation.~~
2. — ~~To strengthen and empower the local church to effectively carry out its mission for Christ in the world, clergy shall be appointed by the bishop, who is empowered to make and fix all appointments in the episcopal area of which the annual conference is a part.~~
3. — ~~Appointments are to be made with consideration of the needs, characteristics, and opportunities of congregations and institutions, the gifts and evidence of God's grace of those appointed, and in faithfulness to our commitment to an open itinerancy. Open itinerancy means appointments are made without regard to race, tribal or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, or age.~~
4. — ~~Appointment-making across conference lines shall be encouraged as a way of creating mobility and open itinerancy. Bishops and cabinets should share information on supply and demand across the church.~~
5. — ~~Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are made as a creative response to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the church and in its leadership. Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are appointments of clergypersons to congregations in which the majority of their constituencies are different from the clergyperson's own racial/ethnic and cultural background. Annual conferences shall prepare clergy and congregations for cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments through adequate training.~~

6. Fixing of Appointments.

- a. Appointments in Provisional Annual Conferences. In provisional annual conferences the role of presidents pro tempore and presiding elders are critical to the work of deploying clergy leadership. The knowledge and discernment local leaders bring to this work is essential. Following ¶¶ 509-513, presidents pro tempore and presiding elders shall carry out the work of pastoral appointments. Presidents pro tempore shall support and equip presiding elders in this work in partnership and consultation with the bishop assigned primary oversight of the conference. Before finalizing a pastoral appointment, presidents pro tem shall communicate the intended appointment to the bishop. An appointment is finalized only when the bishop has fixed the appointment. The president pro tempore shall complete and submit the pastoral appointment form to the general Church staff within 3 days of the pastoral appointment being fixed.
- b. Appointments in Provisional Districts. Where there is not a provisional annual conference, but one or more provisional districts, the bishop assigned primary oversight of the district(s) will support and equip the presiding elder(s) for the work of pastoral appointments, following the guidelines of ¶¶ 509-513. Presiding elders and bishops will collaborate in the appointment process. An appointment is finalized only when the bishop has fixed the appointment. The presiding elder shall complete and submit the pastoral appointment form to the general Church staff within 3 days of the pastoral appointment being fixed.
- c. Appointments in Areas Served by a Transitional Conference Advisory Team (TCAT). As TCATs work toward the formation of provisional annual conferences, pastoral appointment needs will emerge. In areas where there is not yet a provisional annual conference or provisional district(s), the bishop assigned to that area will collaborate with the TCAT leader in the work of pastoral appointments, following the guidelines of ¶¶ 509-513. An appointment is finalized only when the bishop has fixed the appointment. The TCAT leader shall complete and submit the pastoral appointment form to the general Church staff within 3 days of the pastoral appointment being fixed.
- d. Appointments to Churches in Areas Served by a Transitional District Advisory Team (TDAT) or Not Yet Organized. As we continue to build the structure of the Global Methodist Church there will be congregations who join the Church in areas where there is not yet a TCAT, provisional district(s) or a provisional annual conference. In these areas, bishops will consult and collaborate with leaders of the local church, area leaders, general Church staff, along with presidents pro tempore and presiding elders in other areas to care for the pastoral appointment needs following the guidelines of ¶¶ 509-513. An appointment is finalized only when the bishop has fixed the appointment. The bishop shall complete and submit the pastoral appointment form to the general Church staff within 3 days of the pastoral appointment being fixed.

PETITION 037

1509 — (DELETE) CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPOINTMENTS

(PAGE 3 OF 3)

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7. ~~Simultaneous with the announcement of any appointment or group of appointments, the bishop or president *pro tempore* shall deliver a report to the annual conference committee on episcopacy addressing the specific steps that were taken to ensure that persons were considered for each appointment who were of diverse race, tribal or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, and age. Such report shall enumerate the cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments that were made and the extent to which cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments were considered where such appointments were not made. The annual conference committee on episcopacy shall be responsible for working with the bishop and the cabinet to ensure compliance with our commitment to open itinerancy and to the equitable and fair consideration of clergy of diverse race, tribal or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, and age during the appointment process. The annual conference committee on episcopacy shall annually report to the General Committee on Episcopacy the progress of the annual conference in fulfilling our commitment to open itinerancy, and the General Committee on Episcopacy shall annually provide direction to annual conference committees on episcopacy to enhance fulfillment of open itinerancy in each annual conference.~~

PETITION 038

¶510 — (DELETE) CONSULTATION AND APPOINTMENT MAKING

PARAGRAPH	510
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Paragraph 510 from Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline deleted in favor of new appointment paragraph.

~~¶ 510. CONSULTATION AND APPOINTMENT-MAKING.~~ Consultation is the process whereby the bishop and/or presiding elder (district superintendent) confers with the pastor and pastor-parish relations committee, taking into consideration the criteria of ¶ 511, clergy performance evaluation, needs of the appointment under consideration, and mission of the Church. Consultation is not merely notification. Consultation is not committee selection or call of a pastor. The role of the pastor-parish relations committee is advisory, working in partnership with the bishop and cabinet on behalf of the whole church (Philippians 1:4-6). The committee must be given the opportunity to give input on the suitability of a proposed appointment and to raise any concerns it might have. When a committee raises substantive and missional concerns about the suitability of an appointment, such concerns must be addressed by the bishop and cabinet in considering whether to make the appointment. The bishop and cabinet must provide a rationale for their decision to the committee if they make the appointment. Consultation is both a continuing process and a more intense involvement during the period of change in appointment. The process of consultation is mandatory in every annual conference. The Council of Bishops shall hold its members accountable for the implementation of the process of consultation in appointment-making in their respective areas.

PARAGRAPH 511

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Paragraph 511 from Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline deleted to be replaced by new paragraph on appointments.

¶ 511. CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENTS. Appointments during the period preceding the convening conference must take into account the unique needs of a charge, the community context, and also the gifts and evidence of God's grace of a particular pastor. To assist bishops, cabinets, pastors, and congregations to achieve an effective match of charges and pastors, criteria must be developed and analyzed in each instance and then shared with pastors and congregations.

1. *Congregations* — The presiding elder (district superintendent) shall develop with the pastor and the pastor-parish relations committee of each church a profile that reflects the needs, characteristics, and opportunities for mission of the congregation consistent with the Global Methodist Church's mission statement. These profiles shall be reviewed and updated prior to an appointment being made.
2. *Pastors* — The presiding elder (district superintendent) shall develop with the pastor a profile reflecting the pastor's gifts, evidence of God's grace, professional experience, and expectations, and also the needs and concerns of the pastor's spouse and family. These profiles shall be reviewed and updated prior to an appointment being made.
3. *Missional Setting* — The presiding elder (district superintendent) should develop community profiles with the pastor and the pastor-parish relations committee. Sources of information for these profiles could include: neighborhood surveys; local, state, and national census data; information from the annual conference; and research data. Profiles should be reviewed and updated prior to an appointment being made.

PARAGRAPH 512

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Paragraph 512 of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline is deleted to be replaced with a single paragraph on appointments.

¶ 512. CLERGY EFFECTIVENESS AND APPOINTMENT ASSURANCE. Clergy are one of the vital resources the Global Methodist Church has to make disciples of Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness across the land. To carry out our God-given mission, clergy must be effective in their leadership and ministry. Accordingly, within the Global Methodist Church, neither elders nor deacons shall have the right to a guaranteed appointment. If a bishop chooses not to appoint a clergy person, the bishop must provide a written rationale for that decision to the individual involved. Clergy are free to seek an appointment in an annual conference other than their own. Deacons and elders who are not under a current appointment shall be considered inactive (¶¶ 409.3, 410.3 respectively.)

PETITION 041

¶513 — (DELETE) FREQUENCY OF APPOINTMENTS

PARAGRAPH 513

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Paragraph 513 of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline deleted and new comprehensive paragraph created.

¶ 513. FREQUENCY OF APPOINTMENTS. While the bishop shall report all pastoral appointments to each regular session of an annual conference, appointments to charges may be made at any time deemed advisable by the bishop and cabinet. Appointments are made with the expectation that the length of pastorates shall respond to the long-term pastoral needs of charges, communities, and pastors. The bishop and cabinet should work toward multi-year (rather than annual) local church appointments to facilitate a more effective ministry.

PETITION 042

¶514 — (DELETE) APPOINTMENT OF CLERGY TO MINISTRIES OUTSIDE THE LOCAL CHURCH

PARAGRAPH	514
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Paragraph 514 of Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline is deleted in favor of a new comprehensive paragraph on appointments.

¶ 514. APPOINTMENT OF CLERGY TO MINISTRIES OUTSIDE THE LOCAL CHURCH.

1. ~~Bishops may appoint deacons and elders to ministry settings outside the local church. Such appointments are to be made in consideration of the gifts and evidence of God's grace of the clergy person, needs of the community and receiving organization. The appointment should reflect the nature of ordained ministry as a faithful response of the mission of the church meeting the emerging needs in the world (¶ 403). It may be initiated by the individual clergy person, the agency seeking their service, the bishop, or the presiding elder (district superintendent). A similar process of consultation (¶511) shall be available to persons in appointments beyond the local church, as needed and appropriate.~~
2. ~~Bishops may appoint deacons and elders to attend any recognized school, college, or theological seminary, or to participate in an accredited program of clinical pastoral education. Such appointments are a separate category from appointments to ministries outside the local church.~~

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PARAGRAPH	510
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The proposed paragraph sets forth in one paragraph all provisions related to clergy appointments.

¶ 510. CONSIDERATIONS AND CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENTS.

1. To strengthen and empower the local church to effectively carry out its mission for Christ in the world, clergy shall be appointed by the bishop and these appointments reported annually to the conference.
2. Appointments are to be made with consideration to the needs, characteristics, and opportunities of congregations and institutions, the gifts and evidence of God's grace of those appointed, and in faithfulness to our commitment to an open itinerancy. Open itinerancy means appointments are made without regard to race, tribal or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, or age.
3. Appointment-making across conference lines shall be encouraged to resource churches and enable open itinerancy. Clergy in good standing are free to seek an appointment in any annual conference. Bishops, conference superintendents, and cabinets should share information on supply and demand across the church.
4. Appointment-making will reflect the unique needs of a charge, the community context, and the gifts of a particular pastor. Criteria will be developed in each instance and then shared with pastors and congregations. These criteria may include profiles of the congregation, pastor, and missional setting.
5. Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are made as a creative response to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the church and in its leadership. Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are appointments of clergypersons to congregations of which the majority of their constituencies are different from the clergyperson's own racial/ethnic and cultural background. Annual conferences

shall prepare clergy and congregations for cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments through adequate training.

- a. Each annual conference committee on superintendency shall be responsible for working with the bishop, the conference superintendent, and the presiding elders to ensure compliance with the commitment to open itineracy and the equitable and fair consideration of diverse race, tribal, or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, and age during the appointment process.
 - b. Annually, the bishop and/or the conference superintendent of each annual conference shall deliver a report to the annual conference committee on superintendency addressing the specific steps taken to ensure persons were considered for appointments who were of diverse race, tribal, or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, and age. Such report shall enumerate the cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments that were made and the extent to which cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments were considered where such appointments were not made.
 - c. The annual conference committee on superintendency shall annually report to the General Committee on Episcopacy the progress of the annual conference in fulfilling the commitment to open itineracy, and the General Committee on Episcopacy shall annually provide direction to the annual conference committees on superintendency to enhance fulfillment of open itineracy in each annual conference.
6. Clergy shall not have a guaranteed right to an appointment. Effort will be made to deploy all effective clergy. Deacons and elders who are not under appointment shall be considered inactive (¶¶ 409.3, 410.3).
7. The process of appointment making is to be thoroughly consultative. Consultation is the process by which the bishop and/or the presiding elder confers with the pastor and the pastor-parish relations committee to understand (a) the needs, characteristics, and opportunities for the mission of the congregation, (b) the gifts, evidence of God's grace, professional experience, and expectations of the pastor and any spouse and family, and (c) the missional setting. Consultation is both a continuing process and a more intense involvement during the period of a change in appointment. Both congregations and those under consideration for appointment may decline the finalization of

an appointment with the understanding that other options may or may not be available. The Assembly of Bishops shall hold its members accountable for the implementation of the consultative process in their respective areas.

8. The bishop, conference superintendent, and cabinet should work toward multi-year (rather than annual) local church appointments to facilitate a more effective ministry.
9. Upon the recommendation of the conference superintendent and cabinet, bishops may appoint deacons and elders to extension ministries outside the local church upon approval of the setting by the Board of Ministry. The appointment should reflect the nature of ordained ministry meeting needs in the world in keeping with the mission of the church (¶ 403). A process of consultation shall be available to persons in appointments beyond the local church, as needed and appropriate. Such persons remain active clergy.
10. Upon the recommendation of the conference superintendent and cabinet, bishops may appoint deacons and elders to attend any recognized school, college, or theological seminary, or to participate in an accredited program of clinical pastoral education. Such appointments are a separate category from appointments to ministries outside the local church. Such persons remain active clergy.

PARAGRAPH 515

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The Transitional Leadership Council and the Nature of the Episcopacy Task Force recommend deleting paragraph 515 of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline as unnecessary in the new episcopal structure.

¶ 515. PROVISIONS FOR EPISCOPAL AREAS. The Transitional Leadership Council shall determine the number of interim bishops based on missional potential, with consideration given to the following criteria:

1. — The number of charge conferences and the number of active clergy in episcopal areas;
2. — The geographic size of episcopal areas, measured by the square miles/square kilometers, and the numbers of time zones and nations;
3. — The structure of episcopal areas, measured by the number of annual conferences, and the overall church membership in all annual, provisional annual, missionary conferences, and missions in episcopal areas.
4. — The existing pattern of superintendency.
5. — The number of bishops transferring into the Global Methodist Church who are available for assignment.

PETITION 045

CREATION OF WORKING GROUP FOR GMC BOOK OF WORSHIP

PARAGRAPH	RESOLUTION
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL COMMISSION ON DISCIPLESHIP, DOCTRINE, AND JUST MINISTRY
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The Commission on Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry believes that doctrine is communicated through the liturgy of the Church. As the Global Methodist Church launches, we believe that the creation of a new and authorized Book of Worship is essential for directing the doctrinal and worship life of the Church. The petition calls for the creation of a working group to develop a draft Book of Worship to be presented to the 2026 General Conference of the GMC for adoption.

Whereas the Global Methodist Church is a new denomination in the Wesleyan tradition, grounded in that tradition's historic and orthodox doctrines, discipline, and practices, and,

Whereas the liturgy of the Church communicates those doctrines, discipline, and practices through communal worship, and,

Whereas the Global Methodist Church is a global denomination with various streams of liturgy and practice coming together,

Therefore, be it resolved that the General Commission on Doctrine, Discipleship, and Just Ministry calls for the creation of a Book of Worship for the Global Methodist Church, and calls on the General Conference and/or the Connectional Council to develop a working group for the purpose of creating a draft Book of Worship to be presented to the 2026 General Conference for review and adoption as the Church's authorized liturgy.

PARAGRAPH 301

COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION

SUBMITTER DR. DAVID F. WATSON - DAYTON, OH

ORGANIZATION STILLWATER METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The current mission statement: Lacks any specific connection to Methodism; Could be the mission for any denomination; Focuses entirely on human action; Is wordy; Too many adverbs; Sounds like 1990's U.S. church-growth language. | The proposed mission statement offers several advantages: Clarifies our mission as Methodists; Describes the church's mission as an extension of God's mission; Its description specifies the four historic marks of the church; No unnecessary adverbs.

¶ 301. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH. ~~The mission of the Global Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.~~

~~Anchored in our belief in Jesus Christ, the Church is of God and will be preserved to the end of time to worship God in spirit and in truth, to faithfully preach God's Word and offer the holy sacraments, to edify all who believe and encourage them to grow in their lives of holiness and service to others, to minister to those who are in special need, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, to present the world with a clear and compelling invitation to accept Jesus Christ as Lord. All those of every age and station stand in need of the grace that God has promised to extend to others through His Body, the Church. While it is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit to change the hearts of individuals, ours is the task of sharing the good news of God as we respond to the summons of Christ in Matthew 28: "As you are going, make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you," even as Christ has promised to remain with us always, "even to the end of the age."~~

~~Following the example of early Methodists, we believe God has raised us up in order to "spread scriptural holiness across the land," embodying that "grand depositum" of the faith that John Wesley believed had been entrusted to "the people called Methodists," the continued striving for entire sanctification in our lives. As individual believers in Christ, and as those gathered together in local congregations, our calling is to connect with the communities and the world around us, extending both grace and mercy. Growing in our personal faith, and effectively discipling others, are both life-long expressions of loving the Lord with all of our hearts, all of our being, and all of our minds, as well as loving our neighbor as ourselves.~~

Replace with:

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH: Led by the Holy Spirit, the Global Methodist Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness across the globe.

The church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. The mission of the church is an extension of the mission of God—the *missio Trinitatis*. As Christ draws all people to himself, we participate in that work through our evangelism, worship, preaching, teaching, sacramental practice, works of mercy, works of piety, and fellowship. All those of every age and station stand in need of the grace that God has promised to extend to others through his body, the Church.

While it is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit to change the hearts of individuals, ours is the task of sharing the good news of God as we respond to the summons of Christ in Matthew 28: “As you are going, make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you,” even as Christ has promised to remain with us always, “even to the end of the age.” Following the example of early Methodists, we believe God has raised us up in order to “spread scriptural holiness across the land,” embodying that “grand depositum” of the faith that John Wesley believed had been entrusted to “the people called Methodists,” the continued striving for entire sanctification.

PARAGRAPH 604

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Removes references to “convening,” “transitional,” and specific references to types of conferences which may or may not exist and replaces with “all levels.” It removes the allocation of delegates to General Conference using a older system based upon total number of professing members in an annual conference and replaces it with the formula adopted for the convening conference. Brings consistency of the paragraph to other paragraphs when a three-fourths majority vote is required.

¶ 604. POWERS. The ~~convening~~ General Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters that are distinctly connectional, including, but not limited to:

1. Adopt a constitution for the Global Methodist Church.
2. Ensure the mission of the church is kept foremost by all of the ministries, agencies, clergy, laity, and officers of the Global Methodist Church. In doing so, the ~~convening~~ General Conference shall remember that disciples of Jesus are made at the level of the local church. The ~~convening~~ General Conference shall endeavor to keep as many resources at the local church level as possible, so that the mission of the Global Methodist Church can be achieved.
3. Define the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of those who serve as deacons, elders, supply pastors, and other leaders within the Global Methodist Church.
4. Establish the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of church membership, which shall be open to all who believe, irrespective of race, color, ethnic or tribal identity, gender, or disability.
5. Define the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of the episcopacy and provide for their selection, continuance, and discontinuance. All bishops shall be accountable to the general church through the provisions of Part Eight (Judicial Administration) of this ~~Transitional~~ *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*.
6. Determine the powers of ~~regional, annual, district, and church/charge~~ all levels of conferences and other connectional associations within the Global Methodist Church, providing as appropriate for each such body to adapt structures that may best maximize their mission.

7. Determine the boundaries of regional conferences, and where there are no regional conferences, to determine the boundaries of annual conferences.
8. Establish and give oversight to such general boards, program agencies, or commissions and to form ministry partnerships as shall be deemed necessary for strengthening and promoting the mission of the Global Methodist Church through the local church.
9. Determine a program for raising and distributing the funds that are necessary for the work of the Church.
10. Fix the ratio of representation to the General and any regional conferences, based upon ~~the number of professing members in~~ the number of churches and full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments an annual conference or other divisions of the church not part of an annual conference has as compared to the total number of churches and full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments of the Global Methodist Church as of the deadline set by the Connectional Council, and other factors determined by the General Conference.
11. Approve and revise music resources and worship rituals of the Global Methodist Church, providing for variations as shall be most helpful to particular contexts worldwide, including making such resources available digitally.
12. Provide a judicial system mandating uniform processes and procedures and protecting the rights of all those within the Global Methodist Church.
13. Act upon petitions received dealing with church organization and polity, and resolutions dealing with non-disciplinary matters.
14. Adopt or revise a statement of Our Social Witness, provided that such adoption or revision shall require a ~~three-fourths~~ quarters majority vote of the ~~convening~~ General Conference

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15. To effectively speak on behalf of the whole church, resolutions dealing with social concerns shall similarly require the support of three-fourths ~~quarters~~ majority vote of the ~~convening~~ General Conference. All resolutions not part of Our Social Witness or church law shall remain in effect only until the next General Conference convenes when they may or may not be revised or reapproved.
 16. In the absence of a regional conference, provide for the oversight and/or governance of institutions related to the church such as hospitals, schools, or other such entities.
 17. To enact other legislation it determines would be helpful to the mission of the Global Methodist Church.

PARAGRAPH 410

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER FLORIDA CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition protects conferences against misconduct an inactive elder serving a non-GMC church might commit. For example, if an elder serving a non-GMC church sexually harassed a parishioner and was sued, there would be proper insurance in place to protect the annual conference from claims of negligent supervision. A real-life case involving the FLUMC resulted in a \$5 million verdict against that conference for negligent supervision of an elder in his counseling practice.

¶ 410. ORDINATION AS ELDER.

1. Deacons who desire to be ordained as an elder shall declare their candidacy for such ordination to the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. They shall be eligible for ordination as elder once they:
 - a. Prove themselves faithful, mature, and effective over a period of a minimum of two years' service as a deacon;
 - b. Complete the educational requirements for ordination as an elder specified in ¶ 407.4a.
 - c. Pass an advanced level examination in doctrine, history, discipline and Bible;
 - d. Be interviewed and recommended by a two-thirds vote of the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent for ordination as an elder. In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church. The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church; and

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- e. Be approved by two-thirds vote by the elders of the annual conference in executive session and be approved by the bishop.
2. The additional educational requirements specified in ¶ 407.4b must be completed within seven (7) years of ordination as elder. Persons who do not complete such requirements in a timely manner shall be ineligible thereafter to serve in the office of pastor of a local church but may continue to serve in other capacities as a deacon.
3. Elders are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters. An elder not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall not have voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418. Elders may be appointed by the bishop as a presiding elder (district superintendent), to local ministry as pastor in charge, to the staff of a local church, as a chaplain, as an evangelist, or to other ministry settings. Elders are eligible to be elected to the office of bishop.
4. Inactive elders serving in a ministry setting outside the connectional structure of the Global Methodist Church shall insure themselves with a package of insurance coverage (including limits) determined by their conference board of ministry and cabinet. Such insurance shall include, but not be limited to professional liability and misconduct. Each inactive elder shall annually submit to the cabinet and board of ministry a certificate of insurance showing their annual conference listed as an additional insured.

PARAGRAPH 409

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER FLORIDA CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition protects conferences against misconduct an inactive deacon serving a non-GMC church might commit. For example, if an elder serving a non-GMC church sexually harassed a parishioner and was sued, there would be proper insurance in place to protect the annual conference from claims of negligent supervision. A real-life case involving the FLUMC resulted in a \$5 million verdict against that conference for negligent supervision of a clergyperson in his counseling practice.

¶ 409. ORDINATION AS DEACON. Within the Global Methodist Church, certified candidates must first be ordained as deacons and, after ordination as deacons, may be ordained as elders.

1. *Ordination Questions* — Upon completion of the educational requirements of ¶ 406.2b and ¶407.3a, and passing a deacon's level knowledge examination in doctrine, history, discipline, and Bible, a candidate for ordination as deacon shall be interviewed by the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. During such interview, the candidate shall be asked the following questions:
 - (a) *What is your personal experience of God?*
 - (b) *What is your understanding of evil?*
 - (c) *What is your understanding of grace?*
 - (d) *How do you understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers and in the Church?*
 - (e) *What is your understanding of the Kingdom of God?*
 - (f) *What significance do you believe that the resurrection holds?*
 - (g) *What is your understanding of the nature and authority of Scripture?*
 - (h) *What is your understanding of the nature and mission of the Church?*
 - (i) *What gifts and graces do you bring to the work of ministry?*

-
- (j) *What is the meaning of ordination?*
- (k) *What is the role and significance of the sacraments?*
- (l) *Have you studied our form of church discipline and polity and will you support and maintain it?*
- (m) *For the sake of the church's witness, are you willing to dedicate yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life, exercising self-control in your personal habits, integrity in all of your relationships and if married, fidelity in your covenant with your spouse, or if single, chastity in your personal conduct?*

In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church. The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church.

2. The annual conference board of ministry or equivalent will interview the candidate for readiness for ordination as a deacon. After being interviewed and recommended by the annual conference board of ministry by a two-thirds vote and approved by a two-thirds vote of the clergy of the annual conference in executive session and by the bishop, a certified candidate shall become a full member of the annual conference and be ordained as deacon by the bishop through the laying on of hands.
3. Deacons are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters except the ordination and conference relation of elders. Deacons not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall have no voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418.
4. Deacons may be appointed to serve as part of a ministry team in a local church (including as a pastor) or another ministry setting by the bishop, or they may secure their own position with the approval and appointment of the bishop. Deacons may continue to serve as a deacon indefinitely under appointment by the bishop and are encouraged to continue their education in regard to whatever ministry specialty they are called to pursue.

5. Deacons shall meet minimum educational requirements at the time of ordination as determined by this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (§ 406.2b, c). Following ordination, deacons must fulfill the additional educational requirements established for deacons in § 407.3b within seven (7) years. Deacons who do not complete all educational requirements within the allotted time shall be classified as inactive until such educational requirements are completed.
6. Deacons considering a call to ordination as an elder, or in whom the gifts and graces for the ministry of elder are recognized by a bishop or presiding elder (district superintendent), may be appointed to the office of pastor in a local church. If such an appointment is more than a temporary assignment, a deacon who accepts such an appointment must declare candidacy for ordination as an elder and begin the process toward such ordination following the completion of all educational requirements as a deacon.
7. Inactive deacons serving in a ministry setting outside the connectional structure of the Global Methodist Church shall insure themselves with a package of insurance coverage (including limits) determined by their conference board of ministry and cabinet. Such insurance shall include, but not be limited to professional liability and misconduct. Each inactive deacon shall annually submit to the cabinet and board of ministry a certificate of insurance showing their annual conference listed as an additional insured.

PARAGRAPH	523.5
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	REV. CLARK ATKINS - SILOAM SPRINGS, AR
ORGANIZATION	TRINITY CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	Enables the ongoing work of the Wesleyan Unity Commission as it relates to Other Wesleyan Denominations and removes transitional language.

¶ 523. OTHER WESLEYAN DENOMINATIONS.

1. In addition to wider ecumenical and interchurch cooperation, the Global Methodist Church has a particular interest in fostering greater unity with other Wesleyan and Methodist groups which share a common heritage of theology, history, and polity. Unity among the spiritual heirs of John Wesley is a profound hope and desire of the Global Methodist Church, rooted in our heritage as a “connectional” movement, linking congregations and conferences in cooperative ministry and mutual encouragement. Closer relationships with other Wesleyan groups provide increased opportunities for global mission and evangelism, enrichment in our understanding and practice of ministry, and the sharing of resources and expertise.
2. World Methodist Council — Founded in the 19th century by predecessor denominations of the Global Methodist Church, the World Methodist Council has been an effective forum for the development of trans-Methodist fellowship and cooperative ministry. Following its legal formation, the Global Methodist Church will apply for formal membership in the World Methodist Conference.
3. Other Trans-Methodist Bodies — The ~~Transitional~~ Wesleyan Unity Commission (see ¶ 522.2) is charged with exploring the advisability of membership of the Global Methodist Church in other trans-Methodist organizations, such as the Asian Methodist Council, European Methodist Council, Global Wesleyan Alliance, or Pan-Methodist Commission.
4. Affiliated Covenant Relationships with Other Christian Denominations or Associations of Churches — The Global Methodist Church welcomes covenant relationships with other Christian denominations or association of churches which do not involve organic union with the Global Methodist Church. We celebrate that some may wish to explore a closer, formalized relationship, but not unite organically with the Global Methodist Church. The purpose of establishing such covenant relationships is to enhance our mutual Christian witness and effectiveness, and/or to allow for increased reach into

regions or nations where one or the other has little or no presence. Conversations toward formalized relationships as Affiliated Covenant Churches may be held by the ~~Transitional~~ Wesleyan Unity Commission prior to the ~~convening~~ General Conference as set forth in ¶ 522.2 with such recommendations being presented to the ~~convening~~ General Conference for approval. These covenant relationships may include mutual recognition of baptism and ordained ministry, eucharistic fellowship, shared representation at governing assemblies, and/or plans for shared ministry and resources.

5. Union with the Global Methodist Church — We rejoice that some Wesleyan bodies may wish to explore full organic union with the Global Methodist Church. The ~~Transitional~~ Wesleyan Unity Commission (¶ 522.2), or its designated representatives, shall represent the Global Methodist Church in conversations related to full union. Prior to the ~~convening~~ General Conference, such plans of union may be approved by the ~~Transitional Leadership Conference~~ Connectional Council and Assembly of Bishops ~~or may be recommended for approval for referral to the convening General Conference.~~ Such plans of union shall include: (1) A statement of vision on a preferred future; (2) a statement on doctrinal and theological alignment; ~~and~~ (3) a plan for integration of ministries including evidence of consultation with all regional conferences directly affected by the plan of union; and (4) shall require a three-fourths majority vote by the General Conference for ratification.
- a. ~~Plans which do not require alterations to the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the Global Methodist Church shall be ratified by a simple majority vote of the Transitional Leadership Council prior to the convening General Conference and become immediately effective. The other Wesleyan body shall have voted to dissolve its own governance structure to become effective upon ratification of the plan of union by the Transitional Leadership Council.~~
- b. ~~Plans which require alterations to the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the Global Methodist Church shall require a three-fourths majority vote by the convening General Conference for ratification.~~

PARAGRAPH 612

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Through the proposal of the general superintendency in the episcopacy legislation, the function of bishops in the day-to-day operations of the annual conference is removed and replaced by the newly created role of conference superintendent. This legislation brings alignment to the episcopacy legislation proposed to be lived out in the organization structure of the annual conference.

612. ANNUAL CONFERENCE BOARDS AND COMMITTEES. Annual Conferences shall create the following boards and committees:

1. *The Board of Ministry* — The Board of Ministry shall be responsible for overseeing the recruiting and credentialing of clergy for the furtherance of the mission of the Global Methodist Church.
(¶¶406-410, 418) The Board shall also be responsible for overseeing all clergy changes in conference relations. (¶¶415-418)
 - a. Members shall be nominated by the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ and elected by the Annual Conference. The board shall include elders, deacons, and laity. No more than one-third of the Board may be laity. Annual Conferences shall set the number of members of the Board. Members shall serve for six years and may succeed themselves once. Notwithstanding other provisions of the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, deacons and laity on the Board of Ministry may vote on the ordination and conference relations of all clergy candidates.
 - b. If a member of the Board of Ministry cannot serve for any reason, the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~, in consultation with the Cabinet, shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.
 - c. The Board of Ministry shall elect from its members a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.
 - d. The Board of Ministry may establish subcommittees and teams to assist it in its work.

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2. *Episcopacy Committee* — The Committee on Episcopacy shall be responsible to support the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ in the oversight of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Global Methodist Church, with special reference to the area where the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ has residential responsibility.
- a. Members shall be nominated by the Conference Leadership Committee and elected by the annual conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee with a maximum of 12 persons serving at any one time and no less than six. Members shall serve six years and may not succeed themselves. No member of the conference staff or member of the conference superintendent's ~~bishop's~~ family shall serve on the committee. The conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ shall serve on the committee with voice but not vote.
 - b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the Leadership Committee, in consultation with the cabinet, shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.
 - c. The Episcopacy Committee shall elect from its members a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.
 - d. The committee shall meet only with the knowledge of the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~. The conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ shall be present at each meeting of the committee, except where he or she voluntarily excuses himself or herself.
 - e. The committee shall be available to the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ for counsel including advising the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ concerning conditions within the episcopal area as they affect relationships between the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ and the people of the Annual Conference.
 - f. Keeping in mind the roles, responsibilities, and duties laid in ¶¶502-504, the Committee shall engage in an annual evaluation of the conference superintendent ~~Bishop~~ in consultation with the Transitional Leadership Council.

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3. *Finance and Administration Committee* — The Finance and Administration Committee shall be responsible to develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, budgets, procedures, and management services for the annual conference.
- a. Members shall be nominated by the Conference Leadership Committee and elected by the annual conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee. Members shall serve six years and may succeed themselves once. The conference superintendent ~~bishop~~, one presiding elder (district superintendent) chosen by the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~, and the conference treasurer shall serve on the committee with voice but not vote.
 - b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the Leadership Committee shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.
 - c. The committee shall elect from its members a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.
 - d. The committee shall coordinate its work with the ~~Transitional Leadership Council or its designee~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church.
4. *Leadership Committee* — The Leadership Committee shall be responsible for nominating clergy and laity to serve on annual conference committees and boards.
- a. Members shall be nominated by the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ and elected by the Annual Conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee. Members shall serve six years and may not succeed themselves. The conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ and presiding elders (district superintendents) shall also serve on the committee with voice and vote in addition to the clergy and laity elected by the annual conference.

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- b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.
- c. The conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ shall serve as the chair of the committee. The committee shall elect from its members a vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.
5. *Committee on Investigation* — The committee on investigation shall be responsible for considering judicial complaints against clergy as set out in Part Eight Judicial Administration of this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and specifically ¶809.2.
- a. There shall be seven members, four ordained clergy and three laity, and seven alternate members, four ordained clergy and three laity. None of the members or alternates shall be members of the Board of Ministry or the cabinet - or their immediate family members. Members shall serve three years and may succeed themselves once.
- b. The conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ shall nominate persons for the committee, in consultation with the Board of Ministry (for the clergy members). Nominations shall reflect the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of the conference. The annual conference shall elect the committee, with the power to elect additional members or alternates during the term of office as needed. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character.
- c. The committee on investigation shall elect a chair and secretary and organize at the annual conference following its election.
- d. Should a member of the committee on investigation have been a party to any of the proceedings in the case that comes before the committee, he or she shall be disqualified from sitting on the committee during its consideration of that case, and an alternate member shall take his or her place.
- e. Four clergy and three laity (or their alternates) seated as members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.

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- f. If an annual conference has not yet elected a committee on investigation, the conference superintendent ~~bishop or president pro tempore~~ shall appoint the members of the committee in consultation with the cabinet.
6. *Administrative Review Committee* — The administrative review committee (§ 805.2) shall be responsible for ensuring that the disciplinary procedures for resolving a substantiated administrative complaint are properly followed as required by *Judicial Practices and Procedures* 5.2 and fair process (§804).
- a. There shall be an administrative review committee in every annual conference composed of three ordained clergy and two alternates who are not members of the cabinet or the Board of Ministry – or their immediate family members. Members shall serve three years and may succeed themselves once.
- b. The conference superintendent ~~bishop~~ shall nominate the members of the committee and the clergy session of the annual conference shall elect them. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character.
- c. The administrative review committee shall elect a chair and secretary and organize at the annual conference following its election.
- d. Should a member of the administrative review committee have been a party to any of the proceedings in the matter that comes before the committee, he or she shall be disqualified from sitting on the committee during its consideration of that case, and an alternate member shall take his or her place.
- e. Three clergy (or their alternates) seated as members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.
- f. If an annual conference has not yet elected an administrative review committee, the conference superintendent ~~bishop or president pro tempore~~ shall appoint the members of the committee in consultation with the cabinet.
7. The annual conference may create additional boards and committees to accomplish its work, as it deems appropriate.

PARAGRAPH	522
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Relocation of the Wesleyan Unity Commission from paragraphs 522 to 705 rightly places the commission amongst the other commissions of the general church. We should not have commissions tucked away in alternative paragraphs.

522. CHRISTIAN UNITY.

~~2.—Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission—~~

- ~~a.—The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint a Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission that shall be chaired by a bishop of the Global Methodist Church and consist of eight additional persons.~~
- ~~b.—The Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission shall bring recommendations to the Transitional Leadership Council with respect to full organic union with other Wesleyan denominations or associations of churches either before or at the convening General Conference. The Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission shall recommend to the Transitional Leadership Council whether such denominations or associations shall have representation at the convening General Conference with voice, and with or without vote. Within discussions about greater union with other denominations or associations, particular care shall be taken to uphold the doctrine and moral principles and polity of the Global Methodist Church. The Transitional Leadership Council shall have the option of approving a plan of union to be effective immediately or to recommend such a plan of union to be approved at the convening General Conference.~~
- ~~c.—The Transitional Wesleyan Unity Committee shall bring recommendations for covenant relationships with Affiliated Covenant Churches under ¶ 523.4 to be approved at the convening General Conference.~~

PETITION 058

FUTURE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL CONFERENCES

PARAGRAPH 609

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Removes transitional provisions and permits future general conferences to establish regional conferences. Empowers Assembly of Bishops to authorize meetings of the regional conference via electronic or digital means.

Section II. The Regional Conferences

¶ **609. REGIONAL CONFERENCES.** ~~The Transitional Leadership Council or convening General Conference~~ or a subsequent General Conference may establish regional conferences for the purposes of coordinating and conducting the mission of the Church around the world. ~~The Transitional Leadership Council or the convening General Conference~~ or a subsequent General Conference shall determine the powers, authority, and boundaries of the regional conference. The regional conferences shall be composed of clergy and lay delegates in equal number elected from the annual conferences within each regional conference. General Conference delegates shall also serve as delegates to the regional conference. Where necessary due to conditions that prevent the physical assembling of delegates, ~~the Transitional Leadership Council or the regional college~~ Assembly of Bishops may, with a two-thirds vote, authorize the conducting of the conference via electronic or other digital means.

PETITION 059

RETAINING INVESTMENT IN DIVERSE APPOINTMENT MAKING WHILE CLARIFYING OVERSIGHT

PARAGRAPH 509

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Bishops have a reduced interface with the appt making work of the cabinet. That function is now given oversight through the work of the conf super. Also, the conf committee on epis is replaced by a conf comm on superintendency or equivalent function (507.2). Removing a broad listing of categories of diversity will keep us from the cultural necessity of continuing expansion so we are able to concisely call for diverse persons to each be given faithful consideration in the appt making process.

509. CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPOINTMENTS.

7. Simultaneous with the announcement of any appointment or group of appointments, the ~~bishop or president~~ *pro tempore* shall conference superintendent will deliver a report to the annual conference committee on episcopacy superintendency, or its equivalent, addressing the specific steps that were taken to ensure that diverse persons were considered for each appointments, ~~who were of diverse race, tribal or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, and age.~~ Such report shall enumerate the cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments that were made and the extent to which cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments were considered where such appointments were not made. The annual conference committee on episcopacy superintendency, or its equivalent, shall be responsible for working with the ~~bishop~~ conference superintendent and the cabinet to ensure compliance with our commitment to open itinerancy and to the equitable and fair consideration of clergy ~~of diverse race, tribal or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, and age~~ during the appointment process. ~~The annual conference committee on episcopacy shall annually report to the General Committee on Episcopacy the progress of the annual conference in fulfilling our commitment to open itinerancy, and the General Committee on Episcopacy shall annually provide direction to annual conference committees on episcopacy to enhance fulfillment of open itinerancy in each annual conference.~~

PETITION 060

MAKING TIMELESS AND ADDING FUNCTION OF CONFERENCE SUPERINTENDENT

PARAGRAPH 511

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The description of the period preceding the convening conference has now passed, thus requiring us to make this sentence timeless. The addition of the role of conference superintendent requires the addition of conference superintendent to this list of leadership functions within the appointment making process.

511. CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENTS. Appointments during the period preceding the convening conference must take into account the unique needs of a charge, the community context, and also the gifts and evidence of God's grace of a particular pastor. To assist bishops, conference superintendents, cabinets, pastors, and congregations to achieve an effective match of charges and pastors, criteria must be developed and analyzed in each instance and then shared with pastors and congregations.

1. *Congregations* — The presiding elder (district superintendent) shall develop with the pastor and the pastor-parish relations committee of each church a profile that reflects the needs, characteristics, and opportunities for mission of the congregation consistent with the Global Methodist Church's mission statement. These profiles shall be reviewed and updated prior to an appointment being made.
2. *Pastors* — The presiding elder (district superintendent) shall develop with the pastor a profile reflecting the pastor's gifts, evidence of God's grace, professional experience, and expectations, and also the needs and concerns of the pastor's spouse and family. These profiles shall be reviewed and updated prior to an appointment being made.
3. *Missional Setting* — The presiding elder (district superintendent) should develop community profiles with the pastor and the pastor-parish relations committee. Sources of information for these profiles could include: neighborhood surveys; local, state, and national census data; information from the annual conference; and research data. Profiles should be reviewed and updated prior to an appointment being made.

PETITION 061

CONSTRAINING UNNECESSARY PRESIDING ELDER FUNCTIONS THROUGH EMBRACE OF CONFERENCE SUPERINTENDENT ROLE

PARAGRAPH 803

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE In creating a general superintendency in the episcopacy legislation, the function of bishops in the day-to-day operations of the annual conference is removed and replaced by the newly created role of conference superintendent. This legislation brings alignment to the episcopacy legislation now lived out in the organization structure of the annual conference.

803. COMPLAINTS. The process of accountability is initiated when a formal complaint is filed. A complaint is a written and signed statement alleging misconduct as defined in ¶ 808.1-2 (a judicial complaint) or unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties (an administrative complaint, ¶¶ 806-807). If the complaint is against a bishop, the complaint shall be submitted to the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council. If the complaint is against a pastor, the complaint shall be submitted to that pastor's presiding elder (district superintendent) and conference superintendent, and bishop (or to a president pro tempore in the absence of an assigned bishop). If the complaint is against a local church member, the complaint shall be submitted to the presiding elder (district superintendent) over that local church and conference superintendent. Upon receipt of the ~~The person authorized to receive the complaint, the~~ conference superintendent or their designee shall handle the complaint throughout its process. Upon receiving a complaint, the duly authorized recipient shall describe the complaint process in writing both to the person making the complaint ("complainant") and the person against whom the complaint is made ("respondent"). As the complaint process progresses, the duly authorized recipient of the complaint shall continue to describe in writing to the complainant and recipient new parts of the process in a timely fashion. All original time limitations may be extended only once for 30 days upon the consent of the complainant and the respondent.

Additional Rationale: In the Global Methodist, presiding elders are almost always volunteering their service in addition to holding local pastoral responsibilities. We must be attentive to limiting the unnecessary burdens we place on presiding elders. Since conference superintendents have oversight of the temporal affairs of the annual conference and maintain relationships with the bishops, they are uniquely positioned to carry the complaint through its faithful process, relieving presiding elders of this burden.

PARAGRAPH 407

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE In the Global Methodist, presiding elders are almost always volunteering their service, in addition to holding local pastoral responsibilities. We must be attentive to limiting the unnecessary burdens we place on presiding elders. If the list of courses we have required for ordination as deacon provide opportunity for individuals to adequately prepare for ministerial function, the presiding elder is an unnecessary bottleneck in this process.

407. EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ORDINATION.

3. *Deacons Educational Requirements* — A total of ten courses (30 credit hours) are required for those ordained as deacons.

a. Courses in the following five areas are required for all persons seeking ordination as a deacon:

- Introduction to the Old Testament
- Introduction to the New Testament
- Christian Leadership/Conflict Resolution
- Methodist Theology
- Denominational History and Polity

In addition, those pastoring a church, or planning to pursue elder's orders shall be required to complete a course in

- Basics of Preaching.
- b. Once a deacon has been ordained, a minimum of five further (four for those going on to ordination as an elder) courses will be required. Deacons may choose from courses in the following areas:

- Pastoral Care*
- Worship and Sacraments*
- Apologetics*
- Evangelism and Missions*
- The Gospel Vision for Justice
- Christian Education & Discipleship
- Ministering to Children
- Models of Youth Ministry
- Church Finance and Administration
- Ministry in Intercultural Contexts
- Additional courses in Bible or theology

** required for deacons pastoring a local church/planning to pursue elder's orders*

~~These courses will be determined in consultation with the presiding elder (district superintendent)~~
~~in consideration of the deacon's ministry setting.~~ Failure to complete these additional courses within seven years will result in the deacon being placed on inactive status until the courses are completed.

PARAGRAPH 355

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE As the language of assignment is consistently used to describe the deployment of laity in ministerial function (309.3 and 507.4), any description of a pastoral deployment should consistently be described as an appointment. This instance uses assignment language in addition to appointment language, thus forming inconsistencies in our polity.

355. LOCAL CONGREGATIONS ALIGNING WITH THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH.

4. Where both a local church and its pastor affiliate with the Global Methodist Church and both desire to continue the pastoral appointment ~~assignment~~, the Transitional Leadership Council and the bishop in charge will seek to maintain the current clergy appointment for the sake of stability and continuity in this time of transition.

PARAGRAPH	409
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	As the language of assignment is consistently used to describe the deployment of laity in ministerial function (309.3 and 507.4), any description of a pastoral deployment should consistently be described as an appointment. This instance uses assignment language in addition to appointment language, thus forming inconsistencies in our polity. While 409 is not open, I propose this paragraph be open for consistency.

409. ORDINATION AS DEACON.

6. Deacons considering a call to ordination as an elder, or in whom the gifts and graces for the ministry of elder are recognized by a bishop or presiding elder (district superintendent), may be appointed to the office of pastor in a local church. If such an appointment is more than a temporary assignment, a deacon who accepts such an appointment must declare candidacy for ordination as an elder and begin the process toward such ordination following the completion of all educational requirements as a deacon.

PARAGRAPH 705

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Limiting the function & making explicit accountability structures is essential to development of GC commissions. Otherwise, we will inevitably develop silos of institutional bureaucracy & power. Removing Just Ministry allows us to fully embrace our articulation of the social witness & its broad application across the denomination w/out embracing more culturally volatile language. Relocation of the WUC from para 522 to 705 rightly places it amongst the other commissions of the general church.

705. ~~POTENTIAL TRANSITIONAL CONNECTIONAL COMMISSIONS.~~ ~~The Transitional Leadership Council may form transitional commissions dealing with any or all of these tasks or areas of ministry:~~
Commissions of the Global Methodist Church will be elected by the general conference, limited in scope of function to the roles described herein, and be accountable to the Connectional Council through regular reporting.

1. *Evangelism, Missions, and Church Planting* — ~~including, but not limited to,~~ duties include: fostering cross-cultural and international partnerships between local churches, districts, and annual conferences; vetting, approving, and maintaining accountability for mission projects and their funding; providing for disaster relief and refugee ministry; identifying and providing resources for church planting in various cultural contexts; and consulting with bishops, annual conference leaders, and local churches to plan and strategize for planting churches.
2. *Discipleship, and Doctrine, and Just Ministry* — ~~including, but not limited to,~~ duties include: encouraging growth in discipleship through small groups; proposing liturgies and orders of worship for use by both local congregations and the general church for General Conference approval; resourcing understanding of our doctrines. ; and resourcing local churches in engaging with the church's social witness. ~~and social issues from a variety of political perspectives and from a biblical foundation.~~

3. Wesleyan Unity Commission —

- a. A Wesleyan Unity Commission shall be chaired by a bishop of the Global Methodist Church and consist of eight additional persons.
- b. The Wesleyan Unity Commission shall bring recommendations to the Connectional Council with respect to full organic union with other Wesleyan denominations or associations of churches. The Wesleyan Unity Commission shall recommend to the Connectional Council whether such denominations or associations shall have representation at General Conference with voice, and with or without vote. Within discussions about greater union with other denominations or associations, particular care shall be taken to uphold the doctrine and moral principles and polity of the Global Methodist Church. The Wesleyan Unity Commission shall have the option to recommend such a plan of union to be approved at General Conference.

PETITION 066

DISTINCTION BETWEEN CLM (CERTIFIED LAY MINISTER) AND LAY PERSON

PARAGRAPH 507

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE While 507 is closed, the proposed legislation on the episcopacy includes a new 507 and restates many of the functions of the current 507 in the new legislation, thus making it essential for 507 to be open. I will be proposing 507 is open. The presiding elders responsibility for a vacant charge needs to more accurately describe the vacancy to include a lack of assignment.

507. RESPONSIBILITIES.

1. As an extension of the office of bishop, the presiding elder (district superintendent) shall oversee the total ministry of the clergy and churches in the communities of the district in their missions of witness and service in the world. The presiding elder (district superintendent) is the acting administrator of any pastoral charge in which a pastoral vacancy may develop, or where no pastor is appointed and no lay minister or layperson assigned (per 309.3) As such, the presiding elder (district superintendent) has the following specific responsibilities:

PETITION 067

DEFINITION OF QUALIFIED AND TRAINED AND DISTINCTION BETWEEN CLM (CERTIFIED LAY MINISTER) AND LAY PERSON

PARAGRAPH 507

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE In describing persons who can be assigned to a ministerial function, we should be consistent in naming those that are CLM distinctive from those qualified & trained lay persons. As the language of assignment is consistently used to describe the deployment of laity in ministerial function (309.3 and 507.4), any desc of a pastoral deployment should be described as an appt. This instance uses assignment language in addition to appointment language, thus forming inconsistencies in our polity.

507. RESPONSIBILITIES.

4. Work with the bishop and cabinet in the process of appointment ~~and assignment~~ for ordained clergy, or assignment of certified lay ministers (per 402) or qualified and trained layperson-(as defined by the conference Board of Ministry)-lay ministers.

PETITION 069

RESTORES RESPONSIBILITIES OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

PARAGRAPH 612.3

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Restores language from an earlier version of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline which made the Annual Conference Finance and Administration Committee responsible for developing, maintaining, and administering a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, budgets, procedures, pension plans, benefits plans, and management services for the annual conference.

¶ **612. ANNUAL CONFERENCE BOARDS AND COMMITTEES.** Annual Conferences shall create the following boards and committees:

3. *Finance and Administration Committee* — The Finance and Administration Committee shall be responsible to develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, budgets, procedures, pension plans, benefits plans, and management services for the annual conference.

PARAGRAPH 613
COMMITTEE CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE Removes transitional provisions from the Book of Doctrines and Discipline.

¶ 613. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.

1. — ~~The annual conference should establish a funding percentage for its local churches to support the work of the conference, including providing for the costs of the bishop (¶¶ 611.2, 505). Efforts should be made to minimize conference funding in order to allow maximum resources to remain in local churches. Support for ministries within and beyond the annual conference should not be included in such funding percentage but be raised as mission giving from individuals and local churches. The conference should take into consideration any guidelines offered by the Transitional Leadership Council on the setting of the funding percentage. The general church funding percentage shall be set by the Transitional Leadership Council without adjustment by the annual conference.~~
2. — ~~In order to allocate delegates to the convening General Conference, the Transitional Leadership Council shall establish a deadline by which time the annual conference must submit a list of those churches aligning with the Global Methodist Church and the number of full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments in the annual conference. Delegates for the convening General Conference shall be allocated based on the number of churches and full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments an annual conference or other divisions of the church not part of an annual conference has as compared to the total number of churches and full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments of the Global Methodist Church as of the deadline. (Alignment decisions may be made by local churches after that deadline, according to any provisions adopted by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church, but such decisions would not be taken into account for allocating delegates to the convening General Conference.) The Transitional Leadership Council may allocate delegates to annual conferences or other divisions of the church not part of an annual conference that are formed or in formation after the deadline established by the Transitional Leadership Council.~~

PETITION 070

REMOVE TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

(PAGE 2 OF 2)

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3. ~~As local churches are formed into new annual conferences by the Transitional Leadership Council, the new annual conferences shall begin organizing themselves according to the provisions of ¶¶ 611-612, under the guidance and supervision of the Transitional Leadership Council and any transitional bodies at the general church level created by the Transitional Leadership Council.~~

PARAGRAPH	607
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Removes references to “convening” and “transitional” and establishes the roles of the petitions secretary and the Connectional Council in the petitions process for future general conferences.

¶ 607. PETITIONS TO THE CONVENING GENERAL CONFERENCE. Any organization, clergy member, or lay member of the Global Methodist Church may petition the ~~convening~~ General Conference in the following manner:

1. The petition must be sent to the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ or a designated petitions secretary. It shall be in typed or printed or electronic form, or other means approved by the ~~Transitional Leadership~~ Connectional Council, and shall follow a format determined by them.
2. Each petition must address only one issue if the ~~Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline~~ is not affected; if the ~~Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline~~ is affected, each petition must address only one paragraph of the ~~Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline~~, except that, if two or more paragraphs are so closely related that a change in one affects the others, the petition may call for the amendment of those paragraphs also to make them consistent with one another. Petitions dealing with more than one paragraph in the ~~Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline~~ that do not meet these criteria are invalid. Petitions that meet these criteria (composite petitions) shall not be separated into pieces.
3. Each petition must be signed by the person submitting it, accompanied by appropriate identification, such as address, local church, organization, or annual conference. Any petition submitted by an individual must also be signed by at least ten other professing or clergy members. Each petition submitted digitally must identify the individual submitting it, accompanied by identification as above, and must contain a valid electronic mail return address or return fax number by which the submitter can be reached. Electronic signatures will be accepted in accordance with common business practice.

PETITION 071
REMOVES TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS
AND ESTABLISHES ROLES OF PETITIONS SECRETARY
& CONNECTIONAL COUNCIL (PAGE 2 OF 2)

4. Petitions must be received by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council or its designee~~ petitions secretary no later than 120 days prior to the opening session of the ~~convening~~ General Conference.
5. Petitions properly submitted shall be printed in advance of the convening General Conference in all the principal languages of the church and made available to delegates at least 60 days prior to the opening session of the convening General Conference. Where the content of petitions is essentially the same, the petition will be printed once, with the first author named and the number of additional copies received printed. Upon publication, all translations of the advance publication shall be made available as a downloadable file, free of charge, on the denominational website. Petitions and/or resolutions received after the deadline may be printed and distributed to all the delegates upon the approval of each for distribution by the ~~convening~~ General Conference.
6. The secretary of the ~~convening~~ General Conference shall arrange for electronic access to all petitions, including ~~convening~~ General Conference actions and the resulting impact on the ~~Transitional~~ *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, throughout the ~~convening~~ General Conference session. This access shall be available until the publication of the new edition of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. ~~Implementation shall be according to guidelines established by the Transitional Leadership Council.~~

PETITION 072

REMOVES TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

PARAGRAPH	605
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Removes “convening” and “transitional” and makes permanent the officers of General Conference and empowers the Connectional Council to nominate the secretary of General Conference for election by the General Conference.

¶ 605. OFFICERS OF THE CONVENING GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1. The bishops shall be the presiding officers at the ~~convening~~ General Conference.
2. The ~~convening~~ General Conference shall elect a secretary upon nomination by the ~~Transitional Leadership~~ Connectional Council. The secretary shall oversee the publication and translation of proposals made to the ~~convening~~ General Conference and the actions taken by it, including publishing a transcript of the daily proceedings. The secretary shall be responsible for the corrected copy of the permanent record of the ~~convening~~ General Conference. ~~The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint an interim secretary of the convening General Conference who will serve until his or her successor is elected.~~

PARAGRAPH 322

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The deletion of the two-year maximum on the inactive roll in subparagraph 4 provides local churches with the ability to allow members who have a history of having been faithful and active members in the past but who may live at a distance or are so incapacitated that they are not able to actively participate in the life of the local church to remain on the membership roll. The removal of “for up to two years” in subparagraph 5 harmonizes it with the change in subparagraph 4.

¶ 322. MEMBER INVOLVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

1. Each member is called to fulfill their vows of baptism and membership, being faithful by participating in the spiritual formation, worship, stewardship, and service opportunities each church provides. It is the responsibility of each congregation to establish and communicate clear expectations of their members who share in the partnership (*koinonia*) of the gospel (Philippians 1:5), and the responsibility of each member or partner to strive to meet those expectations.
2. The pastor is responsible for ensuring that members are cared for by implementing a discipleship process focused on helping members to “go on to perfection” by loving God with all of their heart, mind, soul, and strength, and by loving their neighbor as themselves. Pastors are charged with equipping all the members of a congregation to be in ministry by meeting people at their point of need and offering them Jesus (Ephesians 4:11-13).
3. All members of the church are called into a loving accountability with one another. If a member neglects the membership vows, however, the congregation shall use every means of encouraging that member to return to an active faith and to lovingly restore them to the fellowship of the church (Matthew 18:15-17). Each local church shall establish a grace-filled process, approved by the presiding elder (district superintendent), to restore negligent members to full participation in the life of the church. Negligent members may be placed on an inactive roll by a two-thirds vote of the church council.

4. Members placed on the inactive roll may remain in that status ~~for up to two years~~ while every attempt is made to return them to active membership. Members on the inactive roll are suspended from serving on church committees or voting on church matters during that time. If an inactive member does not complete the restoration process or show evidence of desiring to return to a more active status ~~after two years~~, then the charge conference, with the recommendation of the pastor, may remove the member by a two-thirds vote.
5. Upon the approval of the charge conference congregations may require that individuals' membership be intentionally renewed on a yearly basis. In such churches, congregants who do not choose to renew their commitment may be placed on the inactive roll of the church (§ 322.3-4) ~~for up to two years~~, after which the charge conference may, with the recommendation of the pastor, remove their names from the membership roll by a two-thirds vote.

PARAGRAPH	511
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This paragraph governs the process of persons who are bishops in an autonomous Methodist church becoming either active or retired bishops of the Global Methodist Church.

Section VII.

Additional Provisions

¶ 511. TRANSFERRING BISHOPS.

1. A bishop of an autonomous Methodist church may join the Global Methodist Church by clergy transfer. Application for transfer shall include an explicit written affirmation of the doctrines, Social Witness, and church government set forth in this *The Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Transferring bishops shall also agree to uphold *The Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Such a transfer is subject to the approval of the General Committee on Episcopacy and the Assembly of Bishops. When a bishop is received between sessions of General Conference the Assembly of Bishops and General Committee on Episcopacy shall inform the church of their episcopal assignment. All transferred bishops must stand for election at the next General Conference and shall be eligible to serve one six-year term provided that they are elected at the next General Conference following their reception as a bishop by transfer.
2. A retired bishop joining the Global Methodist Church shall become a senior elder and may bear the title of bishop emeritus if granted by the General Committee on Episcopacy and Connectional Council. A bishop emeritus shall be a clergy member of the annual conference of their choice and may serve in any capacity allowed for senior clergy (¶ 416).

PARAGRAPH 512

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The paragraph addresses the process to be followed when there is a vacancy in the office of bishop.

¶ 512. VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF BISHOP. A vacancy in the office of bishop may occur due to death, transition to senior status, resignation, suspension, leave of absence, or medical leave. When the service of a bishop is interrupted by any of the above causes, the General Committee on Episcopacy shall approve an updated plan of coverage for the affected episcopal area(s) in consultation with the Assembly of Bishops. With their consent, bishops *emeriti* may be temporarily enlisted into active service by the General Committee on Episcopacy.

PETITION 078

¶513 — (NEW) STATUS OF BISHOPS EMERITI

PARAGRAPH 513

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This new paragraph addresses the role and status of bishops emeriti.

¶ 513. STATUS OF BISHOPS EMERITI.

1. Bishops may choose senior status (¶ 416) upon approval of a majority of the General Committee on Episcopacy. Elders who formerly served as bishops but are not actively serving as bishops may use the title of “bishop emeritus,” but they will not retain their episcopal responsibilities or membership on the Assembly of Bishops unless they have been assigned by the General Committee on Episcopacy to serve in an interim capacity due to a need.
2. Bishops *emeriti* may assist active bishops at their request but shall not be remunerated for their work except for expenses.
3. A bishop emeritus shall be a clergy member of the annual conference of their choice and may serve in any capacity allowed for senior clergy (¶ 416).

PARAGRAPH	514
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This paragraph addresses the process by which bishops are granted various types of leave.

¶ 514. LEAVES.

1. *Leave of Absence* — A bishop may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months by the General Committee on Episcopacy. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and an interim plan of episcopal coverage shall be approved and published by the General Committee on Episcopacy in consultation with the Assembly of Bishops.
2. *Medical Leave* — Bishops who by reason of impaired health are temporarily unable to perform full work may be granted a leave of absence for not more than six months by the General Committee on Episcopacy. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and an interim plan of episcopal coverage shall be approved and published by the General Committee on Episcopacy in consultation with the Assembly of Bishops. If, after the six-month period, the bishop is still unable to perform full work due to impaired health, the leave may be extended by the committee in one month increments for an additional six months, or the bishop may apply for disability.

PARAGRAPH	515
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This new paragraph addresses the process for filing a complaint against a bishop and its initial handling.

¶ 515. COMPLAINTS AGAINST BISHOPS.

1. Episcopal leadership in the Global Methodist Church shares with all other ordained persons in the sacred trust of their ordination. Whenever a bishop violates this trust or is unable to fulfill appropriate responsibilities, continuation in the episcopal office shall be subject to review. This review shall have as its primary purpose a just resolution of any violations of sacred trust, in hope that God's work of justice, reconciliation, and healing may be realized.
2. Any complaint concerning the effectiveness, competence, or one or more offenses listed in *The Book of Doctrines and Discipline* shall be submitted to the chair of the General Committee on Episcopacy. A complaint is a written statement claiming misconduct, unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties, or one or more of the listed offenses.
3. Complaints not involving abuse may be referred to the Assembly of Bishops for a plan of resolution. Such a plan of resolution must be approved by the General Committee on Episcopacy. Otherwise, the complaint shall be administered according to the provisions of Part Eight: Judicial Administration. Any involuntary status change of a bishop must be recommended by a three-fourths vote of the investigative committee and approved by the General Committee Episcopacy by a two-thirds vote (*Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules of the Global Methodist Church*, 3), with the exception that a penalty following trial shall not require such a recommendation and approval, and shall be implemented immediately subject to any appeal.

PARAGRAPH 516
COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE This petition deletes a paragraph from the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline which is no longer necessary.

¶ 516. INTERIM BISHOPS.

1. ~~Transferring Bishops.~~ A bishop of The United Methodist Church or other autonomous Methodist church may join the Global Methodist Church by clergy transfer. Application to transfer shall include an explicit written affirmation of the doctrines and Social Witness set forth in this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (¶¶ 101-202) and an agreement to abide by its discipline. Transferring bishops shall also agree to uphold the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. The bishop's transfer is subject to the approval of the Transitional Leadership Council. Bishops transferring to the Global Methodist Church shall be available for interim assignment during the period prior to the convening conference to an existing or newly formed episcopal area by the Transitional Leadership Council. The Transitional Leadership Council may assign a retired United Methodist bishop who has joined the Global Methodist Church to serve as an interim bishop of an episcopal area during the period prior to the convening conference.
2. ~~The convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church may establish the process for electing and assigning bishops. Those assigned as interim bishops under this paragraph shall serve in that capacity until their successor is assigned under the process to be determined. The convening General Conference may provide for interim bishops to continue serving as active bishops, provided they meet the qualifications. Bishops transferring into the Global Methodist Church will be subject to the term limits set by the convening General Conference.~~
3. ~~A retired bishop joining the Global Methodist Church shall become a senior elder and may bear the title of bishop emeritus. A bishop emeritus shall be a clergy member of the annual conference of their choice and may serve in any capacity allowed for senior clergy (¶ 418). A senior elder serving as an interim bishop prior to the convening General Conference under ¶ 516.1 will not be considered a bishop emeritus but shall have all the privileges and responsibilities of an active bishop.~~

PETITION 082

¶ 517 — (DELETE) VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF BISHOP

PARAGRAPH 517

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition deletes a paragraph in favor of the new proposed paragraph 512 addressed in another petition.

¶ 517. VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF BISHOP. A vacancy in the office of bishop may occur due to death, transition to senior status, resignation, administrative or judicial procedure, leave of absence, or medical leave. In case the assignment of a bishop to residential supervision of an episcopal area is terminated by any of the above causes or no bishop is assigned to provide residential supervision, the vacancy shall be filled by the Transitional Leadership Council from among active bishops, bishops emeriti, or by the appointment of a president pro tempore. A president *pro tempore* is an elder given responsibility for residential oversight for that area. A president pro tempore assigned to provide residential oversight for an area must reside in that area, unless the Transitional Leadership Council grants an exception for missional purposes. If such an exception is granted, the missional purpose must be clearly stated and the exception shall be limited in time, but renewable by further action of the Transitional Leadership Council.

PETITION 083

¶518 — (DELETE) STATUS OF SENIOR BISHOPS

PARAGRAPH 518

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition deletes a paragraph from the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline which is proposed to be replaced by a new paragraph 513.

¶ 518. STATUS OF SENIOR BISHOPS.

1. ~~Bishops may choose senior status (¶ 418) upon approval of a majority of the Transitional Leadership Council. Elders who formerly served as bishops but are not now serving as interim bishops may use the title of “bishop emeritus,” but they will not retain their episcopal responsibilities or membership on the Council of Bishops unless they have been assigned by the Transitional Leadership Council to serve in an interim capacity due to a vacancy within an episcopal area for at least three months (¶ 516.1, .3).~~
2. ~~A bishop emeritus shall be a clergy member of the annual conference of their choice and may serve in any capacity allowed for senior clergy (¶ 418).~~

PETITION 084

FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION, PENSION, AND BENEFITS

PARAGRAPH	705.5
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	1. Duties should be limited to what is listed in this paragraph. 2. This commission's oversight of pension and benefits programs should be limited to the programs utilized by General Church staff. 3. Annual Conferences should have the authority to determine the best pension and health benefit programs for their clergy and churches.

¶ 705. POTENTIAL TRANSITIONAL CONNECTIONAL COMMISSIONS. The following Transitional Leadership Council may form transitionalconnectional commissions shall be formed to dealing with any or all of these tasks or areas of ministry:

5. *Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits* — Including, but not limited to, duties include: overseeing the financial and fiduciary life of the general church to insure both its integrity and efficiency; reporting publicly the detailed expenses and income; conducting an annual independent audit; collecting and distributing all income received by the general church; managing the legal work of the general church; giving oversight to the pension and benefits (i.e., health insurance, disability, etc.) programs for clergy and lay employees of the church worldwide for those employed by or appointed to the General Church; and encouraging ensuring annual conferences worldwide to providemake adequate provision for pension funding and medical health care benefits for those clergy and laity who serve (active) or served (senior or retired status) in the church's ministry (active and retired).

PARAGRAPH 519

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition deletes paragraph 519 from the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline in favor of new proposed paragraph 514.

¶ 519. LEAVES.

1. ~~Leave of Absence~~ — A bishop may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months by the Transitional Leadership Council. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the Transitional Leadership Council shall preside in the episcopal area.
2. ~~Medical Leave~~ — Bishops who by reason of impaired health are temporarily unable to perform full work may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months by the Transitional Leadership Council. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the Transitional Leadership Council shall preside in the episcopal area. If, after the six-month time period is over, the bishop is still unable to perform full work due to impaired health, the bishop should apply for disability benefits through the benefit program.

PARAGRAPH	612.4
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	1. Since the Leadership Committee primarily makes nominations, it is best to have word “Nominations” in the title. This change to 612.4 will then be reflected throughout the BDD. 2. The proposed para 507.1.m states the Conference Superintendent is the Chair of the Leadership Team, not the bishop. 3. It is unreasonable to have all Presiding Elders serve on the Nominations and Leadership Committee, especially in conferences with numerous PE’s. One PE is more reasonable.

Note: this petition primarily concerns ¶ 612.4, but one change is reflected in other places in ¶ 612.

¶ 612. ANNUAL CONFERENCE BOARDS AND COMMITTEES. Annual Conferences shall create the following boards and committees:

4. Nominations and Leadership Committee — The Nominations and Leadership Committee shall be responsible for nominating clergy and laity to serve on annual conference committees and boards.
 - a. Members shall be nominated by the ~~bishop~~Conference Superintendent and elected by the Annual Conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee. Members shall serve six years and may not succeed themselves. The ~~bishop~~Conference Superintendent and one presiding elders (district superintendents)chosen by the Conference Superintendent shall also serve on the committee with voice and vote in addition to the clergy and laity elected by the annual conference.
 - b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the ~~bishop~~Conference Superintendent shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.
 - c. The ~~bishop~~Conference Superintendent shall serve as the chair of the committee. The committee shall elect from its members a vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.

This name change will also affect 2.a, 2.b, 3.a, 3.b in the following way:

2. *Episcopacy Committee* — The Committee on Episcopacy shall be responsible to support the bishop in the oversight of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Global Methodist Church, with special reference to the area where the bishop has residential responsibility.
 - a. Members shall be nominated by the Conference Nominations and Leadership Committee and elected by the annual conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee with a maximum of 12 persons serving at any one time and no less than six. Members shall serve six years and may not succeed themselves. No member of the conference staff or member of the bishop's family shall serve on the committee. The bishop shall serve on the committee with voice but not vote.
 - b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the Nominations and Leadership Committee, in consultation with the cabinet, shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.
3. *Finance and Administration Committee* — The Finance and Administration Committee shall be responsible to develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, budgets, procedures, and management services for the annual conference.
 - a. Members shall be nominated by the Conference Nominations and Leadership Committee and elected by the annual conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee. Members shall serve six years and may succeed themselves once. The bishop, one presiding elder (district superintendent) chosen by the bishop, and the conference treasurer shall serve on the committee with voice but not vote.
 - b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the Nominations and Leadership Committee shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.

PETITION 087

¶520 — (DELETE) COMPLAINTS AGAINST BISHOPS

PARAGRAPH 520

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition eliminates a paragraph from the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline in favor of a proposed new paragraph 515 addressing the same subject.

¶ 520. COMPLAINTS AGAINST BISHOPS.

1. — ~~Episcopal leadership in the Global Methodist Church shares with all other ordained persons in the sacred trust of their ordination. The ministry of bishops as set forth in the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* also flows from the Scriptures. Whenever a bishop violates this trust or is unable to fulfill appropriate responsibilities, continuation in the episcopal office shall be subject to review. This review shall have as its primary purpose a just resolution of any violations of this sacred trust, in the hope that God's work of justice, reconciliation, and healing may be realized.~~
2. — ~~Any complaint concerning the effectiveness, competence, or one or more of the offenses listed in the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* shall be submitted to the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council. A complaint is a written statement claiming misconduct, unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties, or one or more of the listed offenses.~~
3. — ~~The complaint shall be administered according to the provisions of Part Eight: Judicial Administration. Any involuntary status change of a bishop must be recommended by a three-fourths vote of the investigative committee and approved by the Transitional Leadership Council by a two-thirds vote (*Judicial Practice and Procedure* 3).~~

PARAGRAPH	507; 509
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This proposal modifies ¶ 509 of the Superintendency Report released by the TLC on April 10, 2024, not the current TBDD. It removes and changes some responsibilities to reflect the fact that most Presiding Elders are volunteers who serve local churches, rather than full-time employees of the Conference.

Note: This proposal modifies ¶ 509 of the Superintendency Report released by the TLC on April 10, 2024, not the current TBDD. Presiding Elders are addressed in ¶ 507 of the TBDD, but the language and numbers used here reflect what is contained in the Superintendency Report.

¶ 509. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRESIDING ELDERS.

As an extension of the office of bishop and conference superintendent, the presiding elder shall oversee the ministry of the clergy and churches in the communities of the district to which they are appointed. The presiding elder is the acting administrator of any pastoral charge in which a pastoral vacancy may develop, or where no pastor is appointed. The presiding elder has the following specific responsibilities:

(only the sections with proposed changes are included)

5. ~~Develop an effective system for recruitment of candidates for ministry. Support the work of~~
recruiting candidates for ordained ministry within the functioning system developed by the annual conference Board of Ministry.
8. Maintain regular contact with the clergy and churches in their district for counsel and supervision, which may include ~~and receive written or electronic evaluations reports which include~~ from each appointed clergy or assigned layperson's on their continuing education, spiritual practices, current ministry work, and goals for future ministry.
9. Facilitate the proper maintenance of ~~Maintain~~ the appropriate records for all persons appointed or assigned to the charges, including clergy in extension ministry.

-
10. Facilitate the proper maintenance for ~~Maintain~~ the appropriate records ~~dealing with~~ property, endowments, and other tangible assets of the district.

RATIONALE:

509.5 – Candidacy Recruitment systems are better placed within the Board of Ministry (612.1) and should be run at the Conference level, not the district level. Presiding Elders have a role to play in the process, but should not be the person to develop and administer the process.

509.8 – Three changes are included here:

1. Presiding Elders have a responsibility to counsel and supervise the churches, not just the clergy.
2. Presiding Elders cannot adequately evaluate the clergy persons within their district since those who serve local churches themselves (which are the majority of our PE's) are rarely able to be present in another church on a Sunday morning.
3. Making optional the list of items requested from pastors under their supervision allows the Cabinet or individual Presiding Elders to determine the best way to counsel and supervise clergy in their local context.

509.9 – This is not something that Presiding Elders **MUST** personally do, but is something they should facilitate.

509.10 – Again, this is not something Presiding Elders **MUST** personally do, but is something they should facilitate.

PARAGRAPH	322.3
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This is a local church action, so the Presiding Elder should not be required to review and approve this.

¶ 322. MEMBER INVOLVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

3. All members of the church are called into a loving accountability with one another. If a member neglects the membership vows, however, the congregation shall use every means of encouraging that member to return to an active faith and to lovingly restore them to the fellowship of the church (Matthew 18:15-17). Each local church shall establish a grace-filled process, ~~approved by the presiding elder (district superintendent),~~ to restore negligent members to full participation in the life of the church. Negligent members may be placed on an inactive roll by a two-thirds vote of the church council.

PARAGRAPH	521
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition would delete an existing paragraph of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline in favor of the adoption of a new paragraph 506 creating an Assembly of Bishops.

Section V. Expressions of Collective Superintendency

¶ 521. COUNCIL OF BISHOPS

1. — ~~Bishops, although assigned to serve an episcopal area, are general superintendents of the whole Church. As all ordained ministers are first elected into membership of an annual conference and subsequently appointed to pastoral charges, so bishops become through their election members first of the Council of Bishops before they are subsequently assigned to areas of service. By virtue of their election and consecration, bishops are members of the Council of Bishops and are bound in special covenant with all other bishops. In keeping with this covenant, bishops fulfill their servant leadership and express their mutual accountability. The Council of Bishops is a faith community of mutual trust and concern responsible for the faith development and continuing well-being of its members. Prior to the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church, interim bishops may begin to meet digitally or in person as an interim Council of Bishops to provide mutual support and to share best practices, but the Council shall have no other responsibilities.~~
2. — ~~The Council of Bishops is thus the collegial expression of episcopal leadership in and to the Church and through the Church into the world. The Church expects the Council of Bishops to speak to the Church and from the Church to the world.~~
3. — ~~The Council of Bishops is composed of all active bishops and any senior elders who are assigned to serve as interim bishops for a minimum of three months. There shall be no funds allocated for any Council staff. Bishops emeriti who are not appointed to serve as interim bishops shall not attend meetings of the Council of Bishops or participate in its deliberations.~~

PARAGRAPH	522
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition would eliminate a paragraph from the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline in favor of a new petition creating paragraph 715 addressing the same topic.

Section VI. Ecumenical Relationships

¶522. CHRISTIAN UNITY.

1. — ~~The Global Methodist Church recognizes that the global Christian community transcends denominational barriers, consisting of “all true believers under the Lordship of Jesus Christ,” and may be found wherever the “pure word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered.” Jesus’ prayer in John 17 that all his disciples “may be one” compels us to seek closer communion with brothers and sisters of different communions. Locally and globally, Christian communions which are committed to the “faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 1:3) will find in the Global Methodist Church a willing partner in worship, evangelism, disciple-making, and works of mercy.~~
2. — ~~Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission.~~
 - a. — ~~The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint a Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission that shall be chaired by a bishop of the Global Methodist Church and consist of eight additional persons.~~
 - b. — ~~The Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission shall bring recommendations to the Transitional Leadership Council with respect to full organic union with other Wesleyan denominations or associations of churches either before or at the convening General Conference. The Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission shall recommend to the Transitional Leadership Council whether such denominations or associations shall have representation at the convening General Conference with voice, and with or without vote. Within discussions about greater union with other denominations or associations, particular care shall be taken to uphold the doctrine and moral principles and polity of the Global Methodist Church. The Transitional Leadership Council shall have the option of approving a plan of union to be effective immediately or to recommend such a plan of union to be approved at the convening General Conference.~~
 - c. — ~~The Transitional Wesleyan Unity Committee shall bring recommendations for covenant relationships with Affiliated Covenant Churches under ¶523.4 to be approved at the convening General Conference.~~

PARAGRAPH 523

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition would delete a paragraph of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline in favor of the adoption of proposed new paragraph 715.

¶ 523. OTHER WESLEYAN DENOMINATIONS.

1. — In addition to wider ecumenical and interchurch cooperation, the Global Methodist Church has a particular interest in fostering greater unity with other Wesleyan and Methodist groups which share a common heritage of theology, history, and polity. Unity among the spiritual heirs of John Wesley is a profound hope and desire of the Global Methodist Church, rooted in our heritage as a “connectional” movement, linking congregations and conferences in cooperative ministry and mutual encouragement. Closer relationships with other Wesleyan groups provide increased opportunities for global mission and evangelism, enrichment in our understanding and practice of ministry, and the sharing of resources and expertise.
2. — *World Methodist Council* — Founded in the 19th century by predecessor denominations of the Global Methodist Church, the World Methodist Council has been an effective forum for the development of trans-Methodist fellowship and cooperative ministry. Following its legal formation, the Global Methodist Church will apply for formal membership in the World Methodist Conference.
3. — *Other Trans-Methodist bodies* — The Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission (see ¶ 522.2) is charged with exploring the advisability of membership of the Global Methodist Church in other trans-Methodist organizations, such as the Asian Methodist Council, European Methodist Council, Global Wesleyan Alliance, or Pan-Methodist Commission.
4. — *Affiliated Covenant Relationships with Other Christian Denominations or Associations of Churches* — The Global Methodist Church welcomes covenant relationships with other Christian denominations or association of churches which do not involve organic union with the Global Methodist Church. We celebrate that some may wish to explore a closer, formalized relationship, but not unite organically with the Global Methodist Church. The purpose of establishing such covenant relationships is to enhance our mutual Christian witness and effectiveness, and/or to allow for increased reach into regions or nations where one or the other has little or no presence. Conversations toward formalized relationships as Affiliated Covenant Churches may be held by the Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission prior to the convening General Conference as set forth in ¶ 522.2 with such recommendations being presented to the convening General Conference for approval. These

covenant relationships may include mutual recognition of baptism and ordained ministry, eucharistic fellowship, shared representation at governing assemblies, and/or plans for shared ministry and resources.

- ~~5. *Union with the Global Methodist Church* — We rejoice that some Wesleyan bodies may wish to explore full organic union with the Global Methodist Church. The Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission (§ 522.2), or its designated representatives, shall represent the Global Methodist Church in conversations related to full union. Prior to the convening General Conference, such plans of union may be approved by the Transitional Leadership Conference or may be recommended for approval to the convening General Conference. Such plans of union shall include: (1) A statement of vision on a preferred future; (2) a statement on doctrinal and theological alignment; and (3) a plan for integration of ministries including evidence of consultation with all regional conferences directly affected by the plan of union.~~
- ~~a. Plans which do not require alterations to the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the Global Methodist Church shall be ratified by a simple majority vote of the Transitional Leadership Council prior to the convening General Conference and become immediately effective. The other Wesleyan body shall have voted to dissolve its own governance structure to become effective upon ratification of the plan of union by the Transitional Leadership Council.~~
- ~~b. Plans which require alterations to the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the Global Methodist Church shall require a three-fourths majority vote by the convening General Conference for ratification.~~

PARAGRAPH 703

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition establishes the position of the Connectional Operations Officer to replace paragraph 706 dealing with the Transitional Connectional Operating Officer.

¶ 703. CONNECTIONAL OPERATIONS OFFICER. The connectional operations officer shall bear responsibility for the fruitful and accountable functioning of all general church boards, commissions, and councils as they work together to fulfill the General Conference’s missional mandates between General Conferences.

1. *Selection* —

- a. The connectional operations officer may be either a clergy or lay person.
- b. As necessary, the Connectional Council will be responsible for revising the job description for the connectional operations officer.
- c. The Council will be responsible for posting the position as widely as it believes necessary in order to surface a large pool of qualified candidates.
- d. From the pool of applicants, the Council shall select a minimum of three and a maximum of six candidates, forwarding the chosen candidates’ applications to the assembly of bishops for its consideration.
- e. From among the candidates forwarded to it by the Council, the Assembly of bishops will determine which candidates it wishes to interview.
- f. The Assembly of Bishops will select its chosen candidate based on a process of its own choosing (e.g., consensus, simple majority, two-thirds).
- g. The Assembly of Bishops will inform the Council of its chosen candidate.
- h. The Council’s chairperson will notify the chosen candidate and present her or him a six-year contract.

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- i. The Council will be responsible for onboarding the connectional operations officer.
 2. *Term* — The connectional operations officer will serve for a six-year term, and if approved by the Assembly of Bishops and the Council, he or she may serve one additional six-year term.
 3. *Performance Evaluation* — The Council's chairperson will annually conduct a performance evaluation of the connectional operations officer, and prepare a report based on the evaluation. The Council may appoint a sub-committee to conduct the evaluation and it may contract with outside personnel organizations in order to complete it. The report will be delivered to the connectional operations officer and the Council. The connectional operations officer will have the right to include a self-evaluation to add to the report.
 4. *Vacancy of the Office* — In the event of the connectional officer's resignation, serious illness, approved leave of absence, death, or removal from the office, the Council will:
 - a. Immediately inform the Assembly of Bishops of the vacancy.
 - b. Appoint a qualified individual to serve as the interim connectional operations officer.
 - c. If the office is permanently vacated, the provisions of ¶ 703.1 shall apply, except that the new connectional operations officer will be presented with a contract for the balance of the previous occupant's term.
 - d. If approved by the Assembly of Bishops and the Council, he or she may serve a full six-year term after completion of the balance of years remaining in the previous occupant's term. And by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly of Bishops and by a sixty percent plus one vote of the Council, one additional six-year term.
 5. *Dismissal From the Office* — The connectional operations officer is an "at will" employee of the Global Methodist Church. Therefore the officer may be dismissed by a majority vote of the Council for any reason and without warning as long as the dismissal does not violate applicable laws in the state where the Global Methodist Church is incorporated. In keeping with Christian principles and ethical standards, the connectional council shall work to remedy any deficiencies in performance before moving to dismiss the connectional operations officer. The Council may choose to propose a severance agreement with a monetary component that includes a non-disparagement clause.

6. *Responsibilities and Duties* —

- a. Serve as the chief operations officer bearing responsibility for the accountable functioning of the Council, connectional commissions, and task forces as they work to fulfill the General Conference’s missional mandates between General Conferences.
- b. Working with the chairperson and secretary of the Council, the connectional operations officer will:
 - i. Schedule all Council meetings, including locations for in-person meetings;
 - ii. Ensure all items necessary for meetings are prepared and delivered to Council members at least one week prior to meetings (i.e., agendas, minutes, reports, and proposals requiring the council’s action); and
 - iii. Deliver an annual report of the Council’s work to the Assembly of Bishops, annually appear before the Assembly of Bishops to provide an overview of the report, and be prepared to answer their questions and respond to requests for guidance in fulfilling the General Conference’s vision and mandates for the church.
- c. Be responsible for hiring all general church executive director level positions as set forth in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, and within the constraints and processes established by the Council.
- d. Serve as supervisor for all executive director level positions as set forth in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.
- e. In consultation with the Council, exercise the authority to relieve persons holding executive director level positions.

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- f. Oversee the hiring, assigning, and retaining of all general church administrative staff.
 - g. Regularly convene meetings of general church executive directors to ensure fulfillment of direction given by the Council.
 - h. Oversee the connectional budget as approved by the General Conference, and the maintaining of all financial records.
 - i. Oversee annual audits of all general church assemblies, boards, and commissions.
 - j. In consultation the Connectional Commission on Finance, Administration, Pension, and Benefits and the executive director of finance of administration, prepare the general church budget for deliberation, amendment, and approval.
 - k. Negotiate and/or oversee negotiation of contracts for general church services and facilities.
 - l. Lead the Council and all general church executive directors in a bi-annual review and evaluation of the missional effectiveness of the general church's commissions and boards, and propose course corrections as necessary to the relevant areas.
 - m. In consultation with the Council, recommend to General Conference changes to the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and implementing legislation.
 - n. In consultation with the Council, oversee planning and research to advance the mission of the church.

PARAGRAPH	704
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition outlines general principles related to the connectional commissions of the Global Methodist Church.

¶ 704. CONNECTIONAL COMMISSIONS. Working on behalf of local congregations and conferences, the connectional commissions of the Church provide for essential functions in an efficient, fiscally responsible, and cooperative manner, conducive to the needs of our collective ministry. To this end, they exist to serve the Church, whether embodied in resourcing its members, clergy, local churches, missions, or conferences; or embodied in the exercising of authority on behalf of the Church and its constituent bodies. At all times the connectional commissions exist to serve and facilitate the mission and ministry of the Church, which in turn exists to serve the Lord.

1. All connectional commissions of the Church are amenable to the Connectional Council and ultimately the General Conference, except as herein otherwise provided, or as governed by appropriate civil law.
2. The General Conference shall have authority to create, regulate, reconfigure, or abolish connectional commissions, except as limited herein or as governed by appropriate civil law.
3. The following connectional commissions are established within the Global Methodist Church: Connectional Commission on Evangelism, Church Multiplication, Missional Mobilization, and Disaster Response; Connectional Commission on Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry; Connectional Commission on Ministry and Higher Education; Connectional Commission on Communications; Connectional Commission on Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits; Connectional Commission on General Conference, Connectional Commission on Ecumenical Relationships; and Connectional Commission on Conferences.

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4. Annual conferences shall have authority in like manner to establish, regulate, reconfigure, or abolish their own commissions; provided it is done in accordance with the requirements established by the General Conference. Annual conferences may share commissions between them by joint agreement for the purpose of promoting greater economy, efficiency, and accountability.
 5. The program and priorities of the connectional commissions shall be established by the General Conference or the Council, subject to the provisions of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and governing law and may be altered by the General Conference as needed. Each connectional commission is permitted to structure itself for maximum effectiveness, subject to the requirements of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and the limitation of available funding.
 6. Connectional commissions and their sub-units may meet electronically where it is feasible to ensure the full and equal participation of all its members.
 7. All general church staff shall be employed by the Council and assigned to support and resource the various commissions as needed by the connectional operations officer. All staff positions must be approved by the Council, subject to the budget limits set by the Council.

PARAGRAPH	705
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition provides for the process of nominating and electing members of the general church connectional commissions.

¶ 705. MEMBERSHIP OF CONNECTIONAL COMMISSIONS. Except as provided otherwise in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, the members of connectional commissions shall be elected by the General Conference.

1. At the 2024 convening General Conference, persons shall be nominated for each of the connectional commissions in the manner set forth in the Plan of Organization and Covenant of Our Life Together adopted at the convening General Conference and serve for two years or until their successors are elected. Persons elected prior to the 2026 General Conference shall be eligible for nomination at the 2026 General Conference and their two-year term shall not count against the term limit specified in ¶ 705.2.
2. Beginning with the 2026 General Conference, persons recommended by the annual conferences shall serve as the pool from which nominees are selected. The term of service shall be six years, with members eligible to be reelected once for a total of twelve years. Beginning with the 2026 General Conference, the procedure for election shall be as follows:
 - a. Each annual conference shall nominate, by majority vote of both lay and clergy delegates, up to sixteen persons (clergy or lay, but not bishops) as candidates for connectional commissions, with at least half being lay. Each nominee shall be designated for one or two connectional commissions based on gifts, training, and experience. Care shall be taken to include persons from a broad range of racial, ethnic, tribal, gender, economic, and age characteristics.

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- b. Persons eligible for nomination shall have been members of a local church or annual conference within the Global Methodist Church (or its predecessor) for a period of two years at the time of their nomination.
 - c. The General Conference's Administrative Committee on Nominations shall, from the list of candidates received from the annual conferences, propose a diverse slate of individuals to serve on the connectional commissions of the church, for election by the General Conference, provided that individuals nominated by annual conferences who do not appear on the slate may be nominated from the floor. The slate for each connectional commission shall include the number of members specified by the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, as well as the person the committee nominates to serve as the connectional commission chair.
 3. The General Conference shall elect by simple majority two-thirds of the members of each connectional commission. The remaining one-third of the members of each connectional commission shall be elected by the Connectional Council upon nomination by the relevant connectional commission. Persons interested in serving may apply to the relevant connectional commission. Members elected by the Council are for the purpose of securing greater inclusiveness, experience, or special skills needed for the connectional commission's work. Unless otherwise specified, excluding any bishop serving on a connectional commission and the chair, the membership of each connectional commission shall be at least one-half lay.
 4. With the exception of bishops, no person may serve simultaneously on more than one connectional commission (not including the Council). Members of connectional commissions, including the chair, shall serve without remuneration. Travel and meeting expenses shall be paid for connectional commission members by each connectional commission out of its budget.

PETITION 096

¶706 — (NEW) LEADERSHIP OF CONNECTIONAL COMMISSIONS

PARAGRAPH	706
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition provides the process for election of connectional commission presiding officers.

¶ 706. LEADERSHIP OF CONNECTIONAL COMMISSIONS.

1. Commission Chair — The presiding officer of each connectional commission shall be the chair of the connectional commission. The chair may be lay or clergy and shall be subject to the membership requirement of ¶ 705.2. Following the 2024 convening General Conference, the Connectional Council shall elect the chair for each connectional commission from the persons elected to each connectional commission. Each chair elected prior to the 2026 General Conference shall serve for a term of two years or until their successor has been elected and shall be eligible for re-election following the 2026 General Conference. Beginning with the 2026 General Conference, the chair of each connectional commission shall be elected as provided in ¶705.2(c). Each chair elected following the 2026 General Conference and thereafter shall serve for a term of six years, with eligibility to be re-elected once for a second term of six years. Time served as a connectional commission member shall count toward the total term limit for the chair. Any vacancy in the chair position shall be filled by the Connectional Council upon nomination by the relevant connectional commission.
2. Officers — The connectional commission shall elect a secretary and may elect other officers to facilitate its work.
3. Role of Bishops — No person may serve as the chair of a connectional commission while serving in the episcopal office. Unless otherwise specified, each connectional commission will have one bishop as a member, selected by the Assembly of Bishops, serving with voice and vote to help maintain communication and coordination with the Assembly of Bishops and to provide spiritual leadership to the commission.

PARAGRAPH 707

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition provides general principles applicable to the operations of the connectional commissions of the general church including address issues related to staff and principles of nondiscrimination.

¶ 707. OPERATIONS. Except as provided herein, each connectional commission shall have the authority to structure its own work and business.

1. Staff — Each connectional commission may request such staff as is required for the pursuit of its mission. All staff positions must be approved by the Connectional Council, subject to the budget limits set by the Council. Except for the connectional operations officer, all staff are hired, assigned, and evaluated by the Connectional Operations Officer (¶ 703) and serve as at-will employees.
 - a. Special grants, or gifts designated for staffing, may be used for the hiring and retention of additional staff on a temporary basis, subject to the availability of said monies and with approval of the Council. Such staff shall be hired and supervised by the connectional operations officer, respecting the purpose of the grant or designated gift.
 - b. Connectional commissions may contract with organizations, missions, and denominational entities within the denomination, other ecclesiastical bodies, or parachurch organizations and ministries for the purpose of fulfilling their mission or coordinating on a particular project, provided that no contract will be made with an organization whose mission and/or theological position is inconsistent with those of the connectional commission or of the Global Methodist Church. Contracts that have financial implications beyond the commission's budget must be approved in advance by the Council.
 - c. Each connectional commission shall have the power to dismiss any member of that commission for any of the following reasons: incapacity or a pattern of ineffectiveness, including failure to attend meetings or to perform the duties of their office, immorality, breach of trust, doctrinal incompatibility, or criminal activity. A connectional commission may recommend dismissal or other disciplinary action against a staff person.

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2. *Nondiscrimination* — The Global Methodist Church is committed to open and fair processes in its connectional commissions and task forces, including in the hiring, retention, compensation, promotion, and retirement of staff. There shall be no discrimination based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, current or potential pregnancy, or chronic terminal illnesses, including HIV, provided that the individual is able to adequately discharge the duties assigned to her or him. As a part of our witness, individuals employed by the church shall subscribe to the doctrinal and moral standards of the Church and give evidence of the same in their life and ministry.
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PETITION 098

¶708 — (NEW) AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND MISSION

PARAGRAPH	708
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition provides general principles related to the areas of responsibility and the mission of the connectional commissions.

¶ 708. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND MISSION. The areas of responsibility specified below shall accrue to each of the connectional commissions of the Church. Commissions are encouraged to partner with existing ministries or organizations that are effectively accomplishing one or more of the connectional commission's responsibilities. Connectional commissions shall have the flexibility to organize themselves within the resources allotted to that connectional commission. No commission may serve as a lobbying agency to engage with governmental bodies, either directly or through other entities, except as explicitly authorized by the General Conference, and a connectional commission shall not profess to speak for the Global Methodist Church unless it reflects statements adopted by the General Conference. The members of each connectional commission and supporting staff are to coordinate and collaborate in sharing best practices and in resourcing a full-orbed general church ministry incorporating all the components of each ministry area, working together with other connectional commissions where possible, in support of the Global Methodist Church's mission and strategic plan.

PARAGRAPH 709

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition provides general principles related to the areas of responsibility and the mission of the connectional commissions.

**¶ 709. CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON EVANGELISM, CHURCH MULTIPLICATION, MISSIONAL
MOBILIZATION, AND DISASTER RESPONSE.**

1. This commission shall consist initially of 14 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to that commission. The commission shall thereafter propose the number of members, up to a maximum of 21 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to the commission, subject to approval by the Connectional Council.
2. The commission shall offer resourcing to local churches, annual conferences, and the general church in fulfilling the strategic plan in the following ministry areas, to include, but not be limited to:
 - a. *Evangelism* — Train and equip both individuals and congregations to lead others to know Christ and to foster spiritual renewal across the denomination, including the certification of those called to serve as approved evangelists in the Church. The commission shall (1) establish standards for the ministry and office of evangelist, (2) recommend structures and polices to ensure that those who are appointed to evangelistic ministries function with transparency and accountability, and that they receive professional and pastoral support, (3) interpret and advocate for those serving such appointments to bishops, annual conferences, and local congregations, (4) work to identify quality continuing education opportunities for those appointed as evangelists, and (5) liaise with other Christian faith groups, evangelistic organizations, colleges, theological seminaries and conferences to share the vision and opportunities for evangelists.

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- b. *Church Multiplication* — identify and provide resources for church planting and multiplication in various cultural contexts, consult with bishops, annual conference leaders, and local churches to plan and strategize for planting and multiplying churches, identify, recruit, and train church planters, and encourage the planting and multiplication of churches.
- c. *Missional Mobilization* — Deepen biblical understanding and passion in local churches for mission outreach; promote active mission engagement, multiplying disciples across linguistic, national, and geographic boundaries globally; provide resources and training to equip local churches for effective mission service, and to develop missionally-healthy partnerships; foster connection and partnerships between local churches, districts, and annual conferences with vetted and approved Global Methodist missional ministries and strategic partners; develop commissioning standards for the ministry and office of missionary, equipping annual conferences for the recruiting, training, and deploying of GM Church missionaries; consult with bishops, regional and annual conference leaders, churches and missional partners to develop and coordinate strategic mission mobilization; foster holistic mission strategies and gospel-centered community development, addressing both spiritual and physical needs.
- d. *Disaster Response* — Coordinate the development of disaster response, relief, and recovery ministries in the annual conferences; train, credential, resource and equip churches and volunteers to respond to communities affected by disaster; collaborate in deployment of response services, empowering local churches and volunteers to lead response activities for their communities, aided by the support of the annual conference and extended GMC connection.
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PARAGRAPH	710
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition sets forth the composition and mission of the Connectional Council on Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry.

¶ 710. CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON DISCIPLESHIP, DOCTRINE, AND JUST MINISTRY

1. This commission shall consist initially of 14 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to that commission. The commission shall thereafter propose the number of members, up to a maximum of 21 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to the commission, subject to approval by the Connectional Council.
2. The commission shall offer resourcing to local churches, annual conferences, and the general church in fulfilling the strategic plan in these ministry areas, to include, but not be limited to:
 - a. *Discipleship* — Encourage and resource the continuing spiritual growth of individuals at all levels of the Church through such discipleship programs as classes, bands, and other small groups, the training of leaders, and through identifying and developing liturgies and orders of worship for use by both local congregations and the general church with General Conference approval, emphasizing racial, tribal, gender, and language equity throughout.
 - b. *Doctrine* — Increase understanding of the importance of our doctrine through teaching and preaching ministries and the use of liturgical resources that are consistent with our understandings of the faith, study and propose any revisions in our doctrinal statements, and give guidance to ecumenical engagement with other Christian denominations.

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- c. *Just Ministry* — Enable both individuals and congregations to “do justice” in ways consistent with our social witness and commitments to the sacred worth and equality of all individuals, including developing policies, procedures, and training for addressing sexual harassment and sexual misconduct and advocacy with and on behalf of women, persons of various racial, ethnic, and tribal identities, and persons with disabilities for full and equal participation in the membership and leadership of the Church, monitoring and growing compliance with the non-discrimination policy (¶ 707.2), resourcing annual conferences and local churches in the areas of cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments, and resourcing local churches in engaging with the Church’s social witness rooted in Scripture and the ethical teachings of the historic and catholic church.

PETITION 101

¶ 711 — (NEW) CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON MINISTRY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

PARAGRAPH 711

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition sets forth the composition and mission of the Connectional Commission on Ministry and Higher Education.

¶ 711. CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON MINISTRY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

1. This commission shall consist initially of 14 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to that commission. The commission shall thereafter propose the number of members, up to a maximum of 21 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to that commission, subject to approval by the Connectional Council.
2. The commission shall offer resourcing to local churches, annual conferences, and the general church in fulfilling the strategic plan in these ministry areas, to include, but not be limited to:
 - a. *Ministry Credentials* — implement the standards and qualifications set for various forms of ministry by General Conference, certify the educational programs for training lay ministers, deacons, and elders, develop curricula for ministry training courses, resource annual conference boards of ministry, ensure adequate psychological and background evaluation for candidates, and approve seminaries as recommended educational institutions.
 - b. *Higher Education* — Help unite “knowledge and vital piety” by encouraging Christian perspectives within institutions of higher education that are related to the Church, provide a network of such institutions, and assist in the founding, growth, and vitality of Christian colleges and seminaries with a Wesleyan theological perspective across the world, particularly in underserved regions.
 - c. *Ministry Endorsement* — establish and refine criteria and qualifications for various forms of non-parish ministry, such as chaplaincy, evaluate and approve training programs that meet the criteria and qualifications, examine and credential persons for various forms of non-parish ministry, and support persons engaging in non-parish ministry.

PETITION 102

¶ 712 — (NEW) CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON COMMUNICATION

PARAGRAPH	712
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition sets forth the composition and mission of the Connectional Commission on Communications.

¶ 712. CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON COMMUNICATIONS

1. This commission shall consist initially of 14 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to that commission. The commission shall thereafter propose the number of members, up to a maximum of 21 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to that commission, subject to approval by the Connectional Council.
2. The commission shall offer resourcing to local churches, annual conferences, and the general church in fulfilling the strategic plan in these ministry areas, to include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Develop and encourage appropriate communication strategies across various geographical and cultural contexts that can enables the Church to fulfill its mission and vision.
 - b. Create print and digital resources that communicate the work of the Church, including its commissions and programs, to both laity and clergy, including the publishing of the *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*, and other materials to foster the growth and discipleship of all GM Church members, translate communications and resources into the languages of the Church, and grow the digital communication capability of the Church.

PARAGRAPH 714

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition sets forth the composition and mission of the Connectional Commission on the General Conference.

¶ 714. CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1. This commission shall consist initially of 14 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to the commission. The commission shall thereafter propose the number of members, up to a maximum of 27 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to that commission, subject to approval by the Connectional Council.
2. The commission shall have the following responsibilities:
 - a. Recommend to the Council the site and the dates of the General Conference up to eighteen years in advance and send the official notice to all elected delegates announcing specifically the opening day and hour of the General Conference and the anticipated time of adjournment.
 - b. Plan the schedule for the opening day of the General Conference and advise the delegates in advance of all such special events and orders of the day, the dates and times of which have been determined prior to the opening day of the General Conference, so that the delegates may have an overview of the program of the General Conference.
 - c. Recommend to the Council contracts for the venue for General Conference and hotels for delegates, staff, and volunteers.
 - d. Recommend to the Council the budget for General Conference including for all necessary services, including translation and interpretation.

- e. Set the number of legislative committees and the process for the assignment of legislative materials to those committees in consultation with the Council.
 - f. Recommend to the General Conference amendments to the Plan of Organization and Covenant for Our Life Together.
 - g. Establish the number of administrative committees for General Conference and nominate delegates from the previous General Conference to serve on such administrative committees to be elected by the Council.
 - h. Perform such other responsibilities as are assigned to it by the Council.
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PARAGRAPH 715

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition sets forth the composition, mission, and operating principles for the Connectional Commission on Ecumenical Relationships.

¶ 715. CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS.

1. The Global Methodist Church recognizes that the global Christian community transcends denominational barriers. Jesus' prayer in John 17 that all his disciples "may be one" compels us to seek closer communion with all Christians. Locally and globally, Christian communions which are committed to the "faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3) will find in the Global Methodist Church a willing partner in worship, evangelism, disciple-making, and works of mercy.
2. Each General Conference shall elect, other than the bishop who chairs the Commission, all of the members of a Connectional Commission on Ecumenical Relationships. The Commission shall be chaired by a bishop of the Global Methodist Church appointed by the Assembly of Bishops. The Connectional Commission on Ecumenical Relationships shall consist of four clergypersons and four laypersons in addition to the bishop serving as chair. Those persons elected prior to the 2026 General Conference shall serve for two years or until their successors are elected and shall be eligible for re-election at the 2026 General Conference. Beginning with the 2026 General Conference, each person shall be elected for a six-year term and is eligible to serve a second six-year term if elected. The chair and members serve until their successors are elected.
3. In its work, the Connectional Commission on Ecumenical Relationships shall give particular care to uphold the doctrines, moral principles, and polity of the Global Methodist Church.

4. The Connectional Commission on Ecumenical Relationships shall bring recommendations to the Assembly of Bishops and the Connectional Council with respect to membership of the Global Methodist Church in councils, networks, or associations of other Christian bodies, covenants with other Christian denominations or associations of churches, and the potential organic union with other Christian denominations or groups.
5. The Global Methodist Church has a particular interest in fostering greater unity with other Wesleyan and Methodist groups which share a common heritage of theology, history, and polity. Unity among the spiritual heirs of John Wesley is a profound hope and desire of the Global Methodist Church, rooted in our heritage as a “connectional” movement, linking congregations and conferences in cooperative ministry and mutual encouragement. Closer relationships with other Wesleyan groups provide increased opportunities for global mission and evangelism, enrichment in our understanding and practice of ministry, and the sharing of resources and expertise. The Commission shall explore:
 - a. Membership in the World Methodist Council.
 - b. The advisability of membership in other trans-Methodist organizations such as the Asian Methodist Council, the European Methodist Council, the Global Wesleyan Alliance, or the Pan-Methodist Commission.

If membership is recommended in a trans-Methodist organization, the recommendation shall be presented for approval to the Assembly of Bishops and the Council between General Conferences, each of which must vote affirmatively by a simple majority vote of members present and casting valid ballots. Such action must be presented for ratification to the next General Conference by a simple majority vote of delegates present and casting valid ballots.

6. The Global Methodist Church welcomes covenant relationships with other Christian denominations or association of churches. The purpose of establishing such covenant relationships is to enhance our mutual Christian witness and effectiveness, and/or to allow for increased reach into regions or nations where one or the other has little or no presence. These covenant relationships may include mutual recognition of baptism and ordained ministry, eucharistic fellowship, shared representation at governing assemblies, and/or plans for shared ministry and resources. Conversations toward formalized relationships as Covenant Churches may be held by the Connectional Commission on Ecumenical Relationships with such recommendations being presented for approval to the

Assembly of Bishops and the Council, each of which must vote affirmatively by a simple majority vote of members present and casting valid ballots. Such action must be presented for ratification to the next General Conference by a simple majority vote of delegates present and casting valid ballots.

7. The Connectional Commission on Ecumenical Relationships, or its designated representatives, shall represent the Global Methodist Church in conversations related to union with other Christian denominations or associations of churches. Such plans of union shall include: (1) A statement of vision on a preferred future; (2) a statement on doctrinal and theological alignment; and (3) a plan for integration of ministries including evidence of consultation with all annual conferences directly affected by the plan of union. Plans which do not require alterations to the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the Global Methodist Church shall be ratified between sessions of the General Conference by a two- thirds majority vote of members present and casting valid ballots of each of the Assembly of Bishops and the Council if the other body is Wesleyan in its theology, or a two- thirds majority vote of delegates present and casting valid ballots at the General Conference. The union shall become immediately effective upon such ratification. The other body shall have voted to dissolve its own governance structure to become effective upon ratification of the plan of union as provided herein. Plans which require alterations to the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or with bodies which are not Wesleyan in their theology shall require a three-fourths majority vote of those delegates present and casting valid ballots at a General Conference for ratification.

PARAGRAPH	716
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition sets forth the composition, mission, and operating principles of the Connectional Commission on Conferences.

¶ 716. CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON CONFERENCES.

1. The Connectional Commission on Conferences shall make recommendations to the Assembly of Bishops, the Connectional Council, and the General Conference on the creation, organization, or modification of regional and annual conferences. In this work, the Connectional Commission on Conferences shall be guided by the following:
 - a. To establish the growth of conferences of the Global Methodist Church around the world.
 - b. To intentionally identify the regions of the world requiring a Global Methodist Church conference based on missional opportunity.
 - c. To establish the criteria necessary for the launching of a conference, including geographical considerations, number of churches realistic for the region and evidence of financial stability, and maintaining appropriately sized conferences.
 - d. To build upon the processes used to establish a conference previously.
 - e. To identify markers for and assist with the multiplication of new annual conferences from those that already exist.
2. The General Conference shall elect, excluding the bishops, all of the members of a Connectional Commission on Conferences that shall consist of six clergypersons and six laypersons. The Assembly of Bishops shall elect two bishops who will also serve as members of the Commission. The chair for the Commission shall be elected as provided for in ¶¶ 705.2c and 706.1, and shall not be one of the bishops.

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3. The Connectional Commission on Conferences shall recommend the establishment of new conferences and the realignment of existing conferences.
 4. When applications are made for clergy or congregational membership in the Global Methodist Church by individuals or groups from areas in which no annual conference exists, the Connectional Commission on Conferences shall evaluate such applications to determine whether such applications should be processed, and to determine how supervision, mentoring, and accountability should be provided to such applicants if processed.
 5. In collaboration with the Connectional Commission on Ecumenical Relationships, the Connectional Commission on Conferences shall make recommendations on how entities that are uniting with the Global Methodist Church shall be incorporated into the annual conference structure of the Global Methodist Church.
 6. Upon request of annual conferences previously aligned with The United Methodist Church, or clergy and churches from such annual conferences, the Connectional Commission on Conferences shall make recommendations on how such requests shall be responded to and how such groups shall be organized as part of the Global Methodist Church.
 7. The recommendations of the Connectional Commission on Conferences shall be presented to the Assembly of Bishops and the Council for approval between sessions of General Conference, with each body voting to approve by a majority vote of those members present and casting valid ballots. Such recommendations shall be implemented as approved. Such actions must be presented to be ratified at the next session of the General Conference by a majority vote of the delegates present and casting valid ballots.

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VI
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Establishes that it is the Annual Conference where decisions related to the welfare of clergy can best be addressed while permitting the Annual Conference to defer those decisions or certain parts of those decisions to the general church.

Article VI. Annual Conferences — Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability. The Annual Conference shall be composed of clergy, both active and retired, as well as an equal number of lay members elected by each charge or by the district or conference. Each charge shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are appointed clergy.

In addition to coming together for edification, fellowship, and inspiration, the Annual Conference shall be charged with the following responsibilities:

1. To create a program of ministry within its area that can fulfill the mission of the church and enhance its witness, including forming such commissions or agencies as may be required, specifying the composition of each body and electing the members thereof.
2. To determine and administer a program for raising and distributing funds necessary to conduct the work and mission of the Church in its region.
3. To establish the number of districts within the annual conference.
4. To elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference as per the number determined by the General Conference. Clergy delegates shall be members in full connection in good standing who have served a minimum of two years preceding their election. Lay delegates shall have been professing members of the Global Methodist Church, or its predecessors, for at least two years preceding their election. Both clergy and lay delegates shall be elected by a minimum of fifty percent of votes cast plus one with clergy voting for clergy delegates and laity voting for lay delegates.

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5. To vote on all constitutional amendments as approved by the General Conference and distributed to the Annual Conferences for ratification.
 6. To approve the ordination of clergy as recommended by the Annual Conference Board of Ministry and approved by the ordained clergy meeting in executive session, and to approve clergy status changes as recommended by the Annual Conference board of ministry and approved by the executive session of the ordained clergy.
 7. To encourage and facilitate the planting of new churches, including the authorization of sponsorship by existing congregations, and to charter new congregations.
 8. To establish minimum standards for ~~parsonages and other ministry housing~~ the general welfare of its clergy (i.e. health and life insurance, pension, parsonages, and other ministry housing), if desired.
 9. To approved by simple majority vote the transfer of a congregation into or out of the annual conference to or from another annual conference.
 10. To maintain the records of the annual conference, including the record of closed churches and annual reports from all local churches.
 11. To adopt rules for its own governance, provided they do not conflict with the requirements of the Book of Doctrines and Discipline.

PETITION 109

PRESIDING ELDER NAME CHANGE TO SHEPHERDING ELDER

PARAGRAPH	506 / 507
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	REV. ALAN RICHARDSON - SCOTTSBORO, AL (USA)
ORGANIZATION	NORTH ALABAMA CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	As a new denomination we are establishing our personality, our ethos. I propose changing the authoritarian term from Presiding Elder to Shepherding Elder to change the role, the personality of this position from one of Critical Parent to that of Shepard who leads the flock, knows the flock, cares for the flock, encourages the flock and guides the flock. Ref John 10:1,11,14 Acts 20:28 1 Peter 5:2 Ps 23 Ps 78:52,53,71 1 Kings 22:17 1 Chron 11:2 Is 40:11 Jer 3:15; 23:4 Ez 34:1, 12 Micah 5:4

Petition Proposal 5/18/24

Pertaining to => Section II. The Office of Presiding Elders (District Superintendents)

This proposal is to replace the term “Presiding Elder” with the term “Shepherding Elder” in the above section and everywhere else in the Transitional Book of Discipline where the term “Presiding Elder” appears.

This is a proposal that God has laid on my heart pertaining to the term “Presiding Elder” (which comes across to many as a Pharisee Term) to be replaced with the term “Shepherding Elder” (which comes across as Guiding, Encouraging, Enabling, Constructive and Correcting when needed).

With the advent of a new denomination created to share the love of Jesus with all His lost sheep, I propose replacing the term “Presiding Elder” with “Shepherding Elder” which has such a rich Biblical and historical heritage and carries an entirely different set of emotions to help our new denomination (Global Methodist) to truly reflect a new personality, a new ethos for the future of our denomination.

PARAGRAPH	RESOLUTION
COMMITTEE	PLENARY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This resolution approves a covenant agreement between the Iglesia Evangélica Metodista de Costa Rica and the Global Methodist Church and authorizes Bishop Scott Jameson Jones to sign the covenant on behalf of the Global Methodist Church.

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING COVENANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH AND THE IGLESIA EVANGÉLICA METODISTA DE COSTA RICA**

BE IT RESOLVED that the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church joyfully approves the attached Covenant between The Iglesia Evangélica Metodista de Costa Rica and the Global Methodist Church attached to its resolution and authorizes Bishop Scott Jameson Jones to sign the Covenant on behalf of the Global Methodist Church.

**Covenant Between the Iglesia Evangélica Metodista De Costa Rica
and the Global Methodist Church**

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and for the sake of our shared mission of making and growing disciples of Jesus Christ, the Iglesia Evangélica Metodista de Costa Rica and The Global Methodist Church hereby establish a covenant relationship to the glory of the Triune God. We acknowledge each other as self-governing churches in the Wesleyan tradition whose doctrine and discipline reflects the historic teachings and practices of that movement.

We both are committed to maximizing Christian unity and recognize that our covenant should enhance similar covenants with churches where more unity for the sake of our mission is possible. This covenant should not be construed as restricting either church's participation in other ecumenical relationships. We both are committed to mutuality, recognizing that both churches have been gifted by God and can make contributions to our shared mission.

We are committed to building structures and relationships to enhance our witness for Christ throughout the world. Toward that end we commit to the following:

1. We mutually recognize the validity of each other's baptisms and ordinations and welcome each other in eucharistic fellowship.
2. Leaders of our churches will pray for each other by name.
3. A joint covenant commission will be established to encourage and coordinate partnerships between local churches, districts and conferences. The intention will be to develop shared mission and ministry strategies and initiatives, and to collaborate in their implementation including working together on mission projects. The commission will have an equal number of persons from each church and meet at least annually either by online meeting or in person.
4. Both churches through their own authority will oversee the faithful completion of this covenant.
5. Each Church will invite one bishop, one layperson and one clergy to be seated as non-voting delegates with voice to the Church's General Conference, with expenses to be borne by the persons' own church.

This covenant takes effect upon its approval by the Asamblea General of the Iglesia Evangélica Metodista de Costa Rica and the General Conference of The Global Methodist Church and remains in effect until either one or both of the churches rescinds its participation by action of its General Conference.

Signed,

Bishop Luis Fernando Palomo

Bishop Scott Jameson Jones

PETITION 113

ELECTION OF SCOTT JAMESON JONES AND MARK JAMES WEBB AS BISHOPS OF THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

PARAGRAPH	RESOLUTION
COMMITTEE	PLENARY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Scott Jameson Jones and Mark James Webb have served as the only two active bishops during the transitional season of the formation of the Global Methodist Church. The Transitional Leadership Council recommends that they be elected by acclamation to continue as bishops in accordance with the terms of the resolution.

RESOLUTION ON THE ELECTION OF SCOTT JAMESON JONES AND MARK JAMES WEBB AS BISHOPS OF THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

BE IT RESOLVED that upon nomination of the Transitional Leadership Council of the Global Methodist Church, the convening General Conference meeting this day in San Jose, Costa Rica, elects Scott Jameson Jones and Mark James Webb to serve as bishops of the Global Methodist Church effective immediately with their respective terms of office continuing until their successors begin their service following the adjournment of the 2026 General Conference of the Global Methodist Church. Bishops Jones and Webb shall be compensated from general church funds with their compensation determined by the Transitional Leadership Council or the Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church after consultation with the Commission on Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits. Bishops Jones and Webb, if they so choose, may offer themselves for election as bishops at the 2026 General Conference of the Global Methodist Church.

PARAGRAPH	RESOLUTION
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This resolution outlines the process that will be followed in nominating and electing bishops for essentially a two-year term to serve in addition to Scott Jameson Jones and Mark James Webb as bishops of the Global Methodist Church.

**RESOLUTION ON THE ELECTION OF ADDITIONAL BISHOPS OF
THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH AT THE CONVENING GENERAL CONFERENCE**

BE IT RESOLVED that the following provisions shall govern the election of bishops at the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church and during the service of such bishops from 2024 to their successors begin their service following the 2026 General Conference:

1. Exclusive of Bishop Scott Jameson Jones and Bishop Mark James Webb who are continuing to serve as bishops of the Global Methodist Church, the nominees to serve as bishops of the Global Methodist Church beginning November 1, 2024 shall consist of the nominees presented by the Transitional Leadership Council sixty (60) days before the opening session of the convening General Conference and additional nominees made in the following manner:
 - a. Persons nominated as additional candidates for the office of bishop by delegates to the convening General Conference shall be presented on a nominating ballot. Delegates shall vote for their top three additional candidates to be added to the list of nominees presented by the Transitional Leadership Council. Persons receiving a two-thirds majority vote of delegates present and casting valid ballots shall be added to the list of nominees presented by the Transitional Leadership Council.
2. The convening General Conference shall elect the number of additional bishops as determined by the Transitional Leadership Council and announced prior to the opening session of the convening General Conference. In order for a person to be elected as a bishop, a person must receive sixty percent plus one vote of the delegates present and casting valid ballots.

3. Persons elected as bishops at the convening General Conference shall be consecrated as such prior to adjournment of the Convening General Conference. Such persons shall begin service as bishops on November 1, 2024. Such persons shall serve as bishops until their successors who are to be elected at the 2026 General Conference begin service following the adjournment of the 2026 General Conference. If such persons are not elected as bishops at the 2026 General Conference, their term of office as a bishop shall then terminate and they shall be bishop emeriti of the Global Methodist Church.
4. No person elected as bishop at the convening General Conference, with the exception of Bishops Jones and Webb, shall be permitted to stand for election to the episcopacy at the 2026 General Conference unless such person receives a two-thirds majority vote of the delegates present and casting valid ballots at the 2026 General Conference affirming their inclusion in the episcopal election process at the 2026.
5. Persons elected as bishops at the convening General Conference shall be compensated from general church funds with their compensation determined by the Transitional Leadership Council or the Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church after consultation with the Commission on Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits.

PETITION 115

THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT WORKING GROUP RESOLUTION

PARAGRAPH	RESOLUTION
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This resolution creates a working group to develop a successor document synthesizing the content of the Articles of Religion and the Confession of Faith into a single document.

RESOLUTION CREATING WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP A SUCCESSOR DOCUMENT SYNTHESIZING THE CONTENT OF THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION AND THE CONFESSION OF FAITH

BE IT RESOLVED that the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church directs the Commission on Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry to form a working group to develop a successor document synthesizing the content of the Articles of Religion and the Confession of Faith into a single document and to report the results of such work to the next General Conference of the Global Methodist Church.

PARAGRAPH	C - 204 ARTICLE XII
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE DIRECTORS
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The trust clause has been a source of contention. A provision embedded into the Constitution is much stronger than a simple rule. A provision of no trust clause in the Constitution will reinforce the idea that the true power of our GMC lies with local churches, connected together as a coalition of the willing and not the constrained; we are bottom up and not top down. It is the strongest of safeguard to protect local churches against the overreach of power.

WHEREAS, the Global Methodist Church has simply stated in the Book of Doctrines and Discipline that “There is no trust clause for property held by local churches, annual conferences, regional conferences, connectional commissions, the Transitional Leadership Council or any of their entities, (Para: 902, Stewardship of Assets) and

WHEREAS, the trust clause has been a source of contention before the formation of the Global Methodist Church, and

WHEREAS, a provision embedded into the Constitution of the GMC Book of Doctrines and Discipline is much stronger than a simple rule and cannot easily be changed, and

WHEREAS, a provision embedded into the Constitution serves as an inducement to those local churches who may be hesitant to join the GMC, and

WHEREAS, the provision of no trust clause serves as the boldest of declaration which distinguish us from other denomination(s), and

WHEREAS, a provision of no trust clause in the Constitution will reinforce the idea that the true power of our GMC lies with its local churches, connected together as a coalition of the willing and not the constrained; we are bottom up and not top down, and

WHEREAS, this constitutional provision serves as the strongest of safeguard to protect local churches against the overreach of power, and

WHEREAS, this petition has been discussed, motioned and approved by unanimous vote of the Offices/
Episcopacy Team/Board of Directors of the North Carolina Provisional Annual Conference of the Global
Methodist Church,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that a new Article XII be added to the Constitution entitled “Local Church
Bill of Rights” with subsequent articles to be renumbered, with the statement that “the right of a local
church to be free from a forced closure or trust clause shall not be abrogated.”

PARAGRAPH	JPP 03
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is required because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopacy Committee.

3. PROCEDURES GOVERNING ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS CONCERNING BISHOPS. (See ¶ 807)

1. When the respondent is a bishop, the administrative process outlined in JPP 2 shall be adhered to, with the following changes. The supervisory process shall be administered by the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee or their designee. The chair shall inform the conference episcopacy committee where the bishop presides (if any) and all active bishops of the complaint and keep them apprised of its progress. Any investigative process shall be carried out by a committee of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~Global Episcopacy Committee. The investigative committee shall not include anyone from the annual conference presided over by the respondent bishop and shall be representative of the global makeup of the church. The ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopal Committee shall administer any just resolution of an administrative complaint. Any involuntary status change of a bishop must be recommended by a three-fourths vote of the investigative committee and approved by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee by a two-thirds vote (¶ 520.3, 703.2v). The administrative review committee of the annual conference presided over by the bishop shall examine the administrative process and issue its report prior to any action by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~Global Episcopacy Committee. The ~~Transitional Leadership Council's~~ Global Episcopacy Committee's decision shall be final.

PARAGRAPH JPP 04

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The change is required because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopacy Committee.

3. PROCEDURE FOR SUPERVISORY RESPONSE. (See ¶ 808809)

1. *If the respondent is a bishop*, the supervisory process shall be administered by the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee or their designee (¶ 809.1).
4. The supervisory response shall result in one of three possible outcomes:
 - a. The presiding elder or bishop dismisses the complaint, with the agreement of a majority of the presiding elders in the annual conference (*or if the respondent is a bishop*, the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee dismisses the complaint with the agreement of a majority of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee) as having no basis in church law or fact. In such a case, the presiding elder, bishop, or ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee chair shall provide a written rationale for dismissing the complaint, which shall be placed in the respondent's personnel file and copies of which shall be given to the complainant and respondent.
 - c. A resolution of the complaint is not agreed to and the presiding elder, bishop, or ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee chair determines that the allegations have a basis in fact that merits a response. In such case, the complaint shall be forwarded to a counsel for the church to present the complaint to the committee on investigation for an examination and investigative process.

PARAGRAPH 612.1

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition requires each annual conference to have a connectional council or equivalent body to provide coordination and leadership in the annual conference between annual conference sessions.

¶ 612. ANNUAL CONFERENCE BOARDS AND COMMITTEES. Annual Conferences shall create the following boards and committees:

1. Connectional Council or Equivalent Body — The Connectional Council shall meet at least one time per year face-to-face (absent exigent circumstances that would require electronic or other forms of meeting) for the purpose of communication and coordination of ministry among the boards and committees of the annual conference.
 - a. Membership of the Connectional Council shall consist of the following:
 - 1) One clergy and one lay person elected by and from each annual conference board or committee, including the board or committee chair;
 - 2) The bishop or conference superintendent;
 - 3) One presiding elder as a representative of the cabinet;
 - 4) The annual conference secretary;
 - 5) The annual conference lay leader, if any;
 - 6) Any other conference officers elected by the annual conference;
 - 7) Any members at large elected by the annual conference to promote diversity or to obtain specific gifts, skills, or expertise, if any, upon nomination by the Leadership Committee;
 - 8) The conference operating officer (COO) and other appropriate conference staff persons as the COO determines shall serve as members of the council with voice but without vote.

b. The Council shall have the following specific authority and responsibilities:

- 1) To engage in proactive strategizing, including a strategic plan, for growth in discipleship and mission, and to implement the priorities established by annual conference, making recommendations to the boards and committees for implementation.
- 2) To adjust the annual conference budget between sessions with published rationale, as long as it does not exceed the total amount of the budget.
- 3) To hire, with the consent of the conference superintendent, the conference operating officer and evaluate his/her work annually.
- 4) To approve the staffing levels for all boards and committees, consistent with budget limitations, such staff to be hired by and responsible to the conference operating officer.
- 5) To adopt policies and procedures, subject to annual conference approval, applicable to the annual conference, its boards and committees, and its other entities in alignment with the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and the priorities set by annual conference.
- 6) To coordinate proposals coming from the boards and committees to the annual conference, including the proposed budget, to assure congruence with the church's mission and strategy, as well as congruence with each other.
- 7) To initiate, staff, and set parameters for task forces dealing with issues beyond the scope of an individual board or committee.
- 8) Any other responsibilities or authorities assigned by the annual conference not in conflict with the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

PARAGRAPH JPP 05
COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE The change is required because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopacy Committee.

5. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION. (See ¶ 810)

1. *When Respondent is a Bishop* — ~~The Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee shall appoint a global committee on investigation from among its members. ~~Bishops who are members of the TLC shall nominate persons to be elected. The Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee shall nominate persons reflecting the racial, ethnic, geographic, and gender diversity of the church.

The committee shall consist of nine members, five ordained clergy who are not bishops and four professing members, and nine alternate members, five of whom shall be ordained clergy who are not bishops and four of whom shall be professing members. If possible, no two members and alternates shall be from the same annual conference. All geographical regions of the church shall be represented on the committee. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character. The committee on investigation shall elect a chairperson and secretary and organize following its appointment. Five clergy and four laity (or their alternates) seated as members of the committee shall constitute a quorum. Where technically feasible, members of the committee may participate in meetings and hearings through video conferencing.

PARAGRAPH	JPP 06
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is required because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopacy Committee.

6. REFERRAL OF A COMPLAINT TO A COUNSEL FOR THE CHURCH. (See ¶ 811)

1. *When the Respondent is a Bishop*
 - a. Within 30 days of the conclusion of the supervisory process, absent a just resolution or the dismissal of the complaint, the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee Chair shall name an elder within the same geographical region as the respondent to serve as counsel for the Church. The counsel for the Church shall draft and sign the complaint as a judicial complaint, forward it to the committee on investigation (¶ 811, JPP 5 and 7), and represent the Church in the judicial process, as provided in JPP 6.1 and 7.

PARAGRAPH JPP 07

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The change is required because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopacy Committee.

7. COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION — PROCEDURES. (See ¶ 812)

4. *Bill of Charges and Specifications, Deliberations, Vote, and Referral*

b. *Finding of reasonable grounds by committee and referral of bill of charges and specifications for trial*

- 1) *When Respondent is a Bishop – A vote to adopt any charge or specification shall require six votes. Any bill of charges and specifications adopted shall be sent within five days to the bishop charged, to the secretary of the General Conference, to the chair and members of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee, to counsel for the Church, and to the chairperson of the conference episcopacy committee (if any).*

c. *Findings other than reasonable grounds by committee or other actions*

- 1) If the committee on investigation determines that there are no reasonable grounds for charges, it may dismiss the judicial complaint. When deemed appropriate, it may also refer matters of concern to the proper referring Church official (to the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee in the case of a bishop, to the bishop in the case of a clergyperson, or to the pastor(s) in the case of a layperson) for administrative or other action. Notification of these actions should be given to the respondent, the complainant, counsel for the Church, and the proper referring Church officials, along with a written rationale for the committee's decision.
- 3) Upon recommendation of the counsel for the Church and the counsel for the respondent, the committee may refer the matter back to the bishop (or if the respondent is a bishop, to the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee) as deemed appropriate for a process seeking a just resolution under the provisions of ¶ 804. The bishop or chair shall institute such a process and may use the assistance of a trained, impartial third party facilitator(s) or mediator(s). Such referral shall not constitute a

dismissal or double jeopardy under ¶ 805.8. The appropriate persons, including the counsel for the Church, the counsel for the respondent, and the complainant, shall enter into a written agreement outlining the process, including any agreements on confidentiality. Deadlines shall be suspended during a process seeking resolution.

If resolution is achieved, a written statement affirming such resolution, including any terms and conditions, shall be signed by the same persons who signed the written agreement outlining the process, and they shall agree on any matters to be disclosed to third parties. If the resolution results in a change of ministerial status, the disclosure agreement shall not prevent the disciplinary disclosures required for reporting such change or for readmission. The committee on investigation shall retain jurisdiction for the period of time stated for the implementation of the resolution agreement. The committee shall periodically monitor the progress of the completion of the terms and conditions of the resolution agreement, and shall certify when the terms and conditions of the agreement are completed. When the terms and conditions of the agreement are completed, the committee on investigation shall report its certification, and the status of the respondent as a result of completing the terms and conditions of the resolution agreement, to the resident bishop or ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee chair.

If the process does not result in resolution, the matter shall be returned to the committee on investigation for further consideration.

Also, decision(s) of a trial court that call for certification as to the completion of terms and conditions of the trial court's decision(s) after the end of a trial are to be assigned to the committee on investigation for monitoring and certification of completion of the decision, unless the trial court specifies otherwise. If the respondent fails to complete the terms and conditions of a trial court decision, the committee shall notify the presiding officer of the trial, who may reconvene the trial court for its further consideration.

PARAGRAPH 702

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition establishes a general church connectional council, defines its composition, and outlines its authority and responsibility.

¶ 702. CONNECTIONAL COUNCIL

1. The Connectional Council shall be the chief missional and administrative body of the Global Methodist Church, providing leadership at the general church level in between general conferences. In addition to the express authority outlined herein, the Council shall have full legislative authority with respect to all matters expressly delegated to it by the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or the General Conference as stated in each such delegation. The Council shall be amenable to the General Conference, its actions shall be reported to the General Conference, and its actions must be ratified by the next General Conference for those actions to continue to be valid following the adjournment of each General Conference.
2. The Council shall consist of not more than 24 persons, who shall serve until the adjournment of the next General Conference or until their successors are elected as provided herein. Service on the Council prior to the 2026 General Conference shall not count against any term limitation. Those persons who are elected to the Council prior to the 2026 General Conference shall serve a two-year term or until their successors are appointed or elected. Beginning with the 2026 General Conference, except for bishops elected to the Council, an individual may not serve on the Council for more than a total of twelve years but are elected to the Council for a term not exceeding six years. Service on the Council prior to the 2026 General Conference shall not count against this term limit. All members of the Council serve with voice and vote.
 - a. Each connectional commission identified in ¶¶ 709, 710, 711, 712, and 713 shall elect one clergy, who is not a bishop, and one laity, to represent the commission on the Council. Members shall be elected by each commission at the first commission meeting following General Conference and shall serve until their successors are elected or their membership on the commission ceases, whichever comes first. In case of a vacancy, a commission shall elect a replacement member.

- b. The Assembly of Bishops shall elect two bishops to serve as members of the Council. Those elected prior to the 2026 General Conference shall serve a two-year term and shall serve until their successors are elected. Beginning in 2026, those elected shall serve a six-year term or until their successors are elected. In case of a vacancy, the Assembly of Bishop shall elect a replacement.
- c. The General Conference shall elect four clergy and four laity, from persons nominated in accordance with the Plan of Organization and Covenant of Our Life Together adopted by the 2024 convening General Conference and, and beginning with the 2026 General Conference as specified in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Those elected prior to the 2026 General Conference shall serve a two-year term or until their successors are elected. Beginning in 2026, those elected shall serve a six-year term on the Council or until their successors are elected at the next General Conference. In case of a vacancy, the Council shall elect a replacement.
- d. The Council shall nominate and elect two additional clergy and two additional laity to ensure geographic, racial and ethnic, age, and gender diversity. Those elected prior to the 2026 General Conference shall serve a two-year term or until their successors are elected. Beginning in 2026, those elected shall serve a six-year term on the Council or until their successors are elected at the next General Conference. In the case of a vacancy of a person in this category, the Council shall elect a replacement.
- e. Excluding the bishops, at all times the number of clergy and laity shall remain equal on the Council.
- f. The Council shall elect its own officers from among its members; however, a bishop may not serve as chair or vice-chair of the Council.
- g. The connectional operations officer shall serve as the staff person for the Council, with voice but without vote. The connectional operations officer shall preside at any organizing meeting of the Council until a chair is elected. All general church executive directors shall participate in Council meetings with voice, but without vote. Other general church staff shall participate in meetings of the Council at the invitation of the Council, with voice but without vote.

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3. The Council shall meet at least twice per year face-to-face (absent exigent circumstances that would require electronic or other forms of meeting) and electronically at other times for the purpose of communication and coordination of ministry among the commissions.
4. The Council shall have the following specific authority and responsibilities:
- a. To implement the vision of the Global Methodist Church and steward its mission, ministries and resources as determined by the actions of the General Conference and in collaboration with the Assembly of Bishops.
 - b. To engage in proactive global strategizing, including developing a strategic plan for growth in evangelism, discipleship, and mission, and to implement the priorities established by General Conference.
 - c. To adopt policies and procedures applicable to the general church, its commissions, and its other entities in alignment with the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and the priorities set by General Conference.
 - d. To establish the general church budget annually in accordance with the priorities and directions established by the General Conference provided that each annual budget shall not exceed 90% of the average of general church connectional funding received in the prior two years, except that the 2025 budget shall not exceed 90% of the total sum received in general church connectional funding in 2024. In establishing the general church budget, the Connectional Council shall be guided by the following financial values:
 - i. Accountability to ensure that the assets God has entrusted to us are responsibly managed.
 - ii. Transparency to create trust throughout the connection of the Global Methodist Church.
 - iii. Local church centric as the strategic base for optimizing the mission of the Church.

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- iv. Nimble and Lean Structure of Connectional Entities to ensure adaptability to the ministry needs of conferences and local churches.
 - v. Limited and sustainable policies so as not to restrict, but enable ministry to flourish.
 - e. To ensure the dissemination of information and communication among the annual conferences, connectional commissions, and the Assembly of Bishops.
 - f. To coordinate the work of the connectional commissions and the general church staff to ensure that the actions of the General Conference are implemented, and the vision and mission of the Global Methodist Church is advanced.
 - g. To evaluate the work of the connectional commissions and the ministries of the general church in fulfilling the mission and vision of the Global Methodist Church as established by the General Conference.
 - h. In collaboration with the conference superintendents, to adopt and implement services to be performed by the general church which will benefit the annual conferences and produce cost savings based on economies of scale.
 - i. To evaluate and authorize such changes in the pensions and benefits programs of the Global Methodist Church upon recommendation of the Connectional Commission on Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits.
 - j. To hire the connectional operations officer and evaluate his/her work annually (¶ 703).
 - k. To approve and authorize all staff positions at the general church level.
 - l. To fill vacancies among the members of a connectional commission that occur between General Conferences, upon nomination by the relevant connectional commission.
 - m. To coordinate proposals coming from the connectional commissions to the General Conference, to assure congruence with the church's mission and strategy, as well as congruence with each other.

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- n. To initiate, staff, and set parameters for task forces dealing with issues beyond the scope of an individual connectional commission.
 - o. To recommend to the General Conference such changes and implementing legislation as may be appropriate to ensure the effectiveness of the Global Methodist Church.
5. The Council shall be an incorporated legal entity.

PARAGRAPH 713

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition creates the Connectional Commission on Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits, defines its composition, and outlines its responsibilities.

¶ 713. CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION, PENSIONS, AND BENEFITS.

1. This commission shall consist initially of 14 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to that commission. The commission shall thereafter propose the number of members, up to a maximum of 21 members plus the chair and the bishop assigned to that commission, subject to approval by the Connectional Council.
2. The commission shall offer resourcing to local churches, annual conferences, and the general church in fulfilling the strategic plan in these ministry areas, to include, but not be limited to:
 - a. *Finance* — Oversee the financial and fiduciary life of the general church, including the Assembly of Bishops, its commissions and programs, to insure both their integrity and efficiency, reporting publicly the detailed expenses and income of all entities, conducting an annual independent audit of the Assembly of Bishops and each commission's finances, collecting and allocating distributing all income received by the general church, and annually recommending to the Connectional Council a budget for the general church.
 - b. *General Counsel* — Manage the legal work of the general church and provide legal counsel to annual conferences and local congregations as requested, provide for the ownership and maintenance of any general church property.

PETITION 125

¶713 — (NEW) CONNECTIONAL COMMISSION ON FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION, PENSIONS, AND BENEFITS

(PAGE 2 OF 2)

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- c. Archives and History — Maintain the historical archives of the Global Methodist Church and encourage the study of its history to better understand how “hitherto the Lord has helped us” (1 Samuel 7:12).
 - d. Statistics — Collect, make public, and help interpret accurate and timely statistics on membership, ministry, and the participation of its members in the life of the Church.
 - e. Pensions and Benefits — Give oversight to the pension and benefits (i.e., insurance, disability, etc.) programs for clergy and lay employees of the Church and encourage conferences to provide adequate pension funding and medical care for those who serve in the church’s ministry (active and retired).
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PARAGRAPH JPP 08

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The change is required because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopacy Committee.

8. GENERAL ORGANIZATION AND PRE-TRIAL PROCEDURES. (See ¶ 813)

3. *Pre-Trial Motions and Referrals* — All appeals of any procedural or substantive matters that have occurred prior to referral of the charges to trial must be appealed to the presiding officer of the trial court before the convening of the trial. Otherwise, the right to appeal on such matters is forfeited. All objections to and motions regarding the regularity of the proceedings and the form and substance of charges and specifications must be made before the convening of the trial court. The presiding officer shall rule on all such preliminary objections and motions; in furtherance of truth and justice may permit amendments to the specifications or charges not changing the general nature of the same; and may dismiss all or any part of the bill of charges upon a finding by the presiding officer (1) that all or such part is without legal or factual basis or (2) that, even assuming the specifications to be true, they do not constitute a basis for a chargeable offense.

The presiding officer may refer the matter as deemed appropriate for a process seeking a just resolution under the provisions of ¶ 804 to the bishop (or if the respondent is a bishop, to the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee chair) with consent of the counsel for the Church and counsel for the respondent. The bishop or ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee chair shall institute such a process and may use the assistance of a trained, impartial third party facilitator(s) or mediator(s). Such referral will not constitute a dismissal or double jeopardy under ¶ 805.8. If a process seeking a just resolution is used, the appropriate persons, including the counsel for the Church, counsel for the respondent, and complainant should enter into a written agreement outlining such process, including any agreement on confidentiality. If resolution is achieved, a written statement affirming such resolution, including any terms and

conditions, shall be signed by the same persons who signed the written agreement outlining the process, and they shall agree on any matters to be disclosed to third parties. If the resolution results in a change of ministerial status, the disclosure agreement shall not prevent the disciplinary disclosures required for reporting such change or for readmission. The committee on investigation shall be charged with maintaining oversight of the fulfillment of the agreement (JPP 7.5c(3)). Such a written statement shall be given to the presiding officer, and the presiding officer shall take action consistent with the agreement. If no resolution results, the matter is returned to the presiding officer for the continuance of the trial process.

5. *Notice*

- b. In all cases wherein it is provided that notice shall be given to a bishop or presiding elder and the charges are against that particular person, then such notice (in addition to being given to the accused) shall be given, in the case of a bishop, to the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee and, in the case of a presiding elder (~~district superintendent~~), to the bishop in charge.

PETITION 127

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT — JPP 11

PARAGRAPH	JPP 11
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is required because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopacy Committee.

11. TRIAL OF A BISHOP.

1. The ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee chair shall designate an active or former bishop to serve as presiding officer.
2. The trial shall be convened as provided in JPP 9 with the pool of thirty-five or more persons to consist of ordained clergy named by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee in approximately equal numbers from each episcopal area within the geographical area where the bishop presides (with a minimum of three annual conferences represented), excluding the annual conference(s) over which the respondent bishop presides. Special consideration should be given so that the pool includes persons representative of racial, age, ethnic, and gender diversity. Persons excluded by virtue of JPP 9.3, shall not be included in the trial court pool.

PARAGRAPH	JPP 14
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is required because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopacy Committee.

14. APPEAL OF A BISHOP OR CLERGY MEMBER.

2. When notice of an appeal has been given to the presiding officer of the court, the presiding officer shall give notice of the same to the chair and secretary of the Connectional Council on Appeals and submit the documents in the case. In case the documents have been sent to the secretary of the annual or General Conference, the presiding officer shall instruct the secretary to send the documents to the president and secretary of the Connectional Council on Appeals. The Council shall give notice within thirty (30) days to the presiding bishop of the conference from which the appeal is taken (or to the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee chair when the appellant is a bishop), to the appellant, and to counsel for the opposing party of the time and place where the appeal will be heard. Such hearing shall occur within sixty (60) days following receipt of notice to the committee on appeals. The counsels who prosecuted the trial shall continue in the appeals process, unless replaced in accordance with the provisions of ¶¶ 805.10 and 811.

PETITION 129

AMENDMENT TO ¶203 OF THE CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VI
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	NORTH GEORGIA DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Paragraph 203, Article VI, subparagraph 4 provides for a voting threshold of "fifty percent of votes cast plus one." This is inconsistent with Roberts Rules of Order which provides for a simple majority. Moreover, this calculation could result in confusion as a vote could result in 50.6% and still be considered as not passing. This very event occurred during a disaffiliation vote in the NGA AC in November 2023. The Constitution should be amended to require only a "simple majority."

Article VI. Annual Conferences — Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability. The Annual Conference shall be composed of clergy, both active and retired, as well as an equal number of lay members elected by each charge or by the district or conference. Each charge shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are appointed clergy.

In addition to coming together for edification, fellowship, and inspiration, the Annual Conference shall be charged with the following responsibilities:

1. To create a program of ministry within its area that can fulfill the mission of the church and enhance its witness, including forming such commissions or agencies as may be required, specifying the composition of each body and electing the members thereof.
2. To determine and administer a program for raising and distributing funds necessary to conduct the work and mission of the Church in its region.
3. To establish the number of districts within the annual conference.
4. To elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference as per the number determined by the General Conference. Clergy delegates shall be members in full connection in good standing who have served a minimum of two years preceding their election. Lay delegates shall have been professing members of the Global Methodist Church, or its predecessors, for at least two years preceding their election. Both clergy and lay delegates shall be elected by a ~~minimum of fifty percent of votes cast plus one~~ simple majority with clergy voting for clergy delegates and laity voting for lay delegates.

PARAGRAPH 407

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This petition changes the existing educational requirements and the process for meeting those requirements.

¶ 407. EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ORDINATION.

1. *Educational Objectives* — Following the admonition of John Wesley to unite both knowledge and vital piety, candidates for ordination as a deacon or elder within the Global Methodist Church must fulfill basic educational requirements as a part of their preparation process. As a global church, the specific requirements may vary in different regions of the world (¶407.2), but all shall be aimed at ensuring that our clergy everywhere have studied to show themselves approved unto God as workers who do not need to be ashamed, correctly handling the word of truth (2 Timothy 2.15).
2. *Pathways to Ordination* — While educational programs and opportunities may be different based upon geography and life circumstances, those wishing to serve God's people through ordination within the Global Methodist Church should pursue the highest level of learning and preparation possible. The historic degree in North American settings, designed to prepare an elder for a lifetime of ministry, is generally the Master of Divinity (M.Div.), where elsewhere an equivalent education is possible through such degrees as a Master of Arts (M.A.) in biblical studies, a Master's in Ministry (M.Min), a Master's in Theology (M.Th.), or even a Bachelor's degree (B.A.) in the practice of ministry (*for persons residing other than in the United States and Europe*), including biblical studies. In addition, individuals whose setting, age, or life circumstances make such formal academic degree programs difficult or impracticable may, with a secondary diploma, complete a non-degree certificate of pastoral studies from an educational program or programs approved by the Commission on Ministry, requiring the completion of at least the core classes outlined below. The Global Methodist Church will accept courses, singly or in combination, from any of the enumerated degree or certificate programs, so long as the required courses are successfully completed for the level of ordination being pursued.

~~In order better to prepare leaders, the Global Methodist Church requires candidates for ordination as deacons and elders to fulfill basic educational requirements as part of the ordination process.~~

These educational requirements include the courses defined in ~~¶ 407.3~~ below: Six courses (eighteen credit hours) for those pursuing deacons orders, and fourteen additional courses (forty-two credit hours) for those seeking elders orders. Recognizing that educational opportunities vary based on geography and life circumstance, the Global Methodist Church will accept courses, singly or in combination, from any of the following degree programs, so long as the required courses are successfully completed for the level of ordination being pursued: an approved alternative educational pathway, a bachelor's degree program in ministry (for persons residing other than in the United States and Western Europe), a joint Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Divinity program, a program for a Master of Arts or equivalent degree in the practice of ministry, or a Master of Divinity degree program.

2. ~~*Recommended Educational Institutions*~~ — A recommended list of schools for ministry education will be maintained by the Commission on Ministry. Candidates for ordination are strongly encouraged to choose from the list of recommended institutions to complete educational requirements for ordination; however, candidates may complete their educational requirements at any accredited educational institution, including institutions not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list. The Commission on Ministry must approve courses to fulfill the educational requirement for Methodist Theology and Denominational History and Polity. The Commission on Ministry will recommend competencies and courses for ministerial training, as well as establish standards for and supervise approved alternative educational pathways in conjunction with the annual conference boards of ministry.
3. *Deacons Educational Requirements* — A total of ~~ten~~ six courses (~~1830~~ credit hours) are required for those ordained as deacons.
 - a. Courses in the following ~~five~~ six areas are required for all persons seeking ordination as a deacon:

- Introduction to the Old Testament
- Introduction to the New Testament
- Christian Leadership/Conflict Resolution
- Methodist Theology
- Denominational History and Polity

~~In addition, those pastoring a church, or planning to pursue elder's orders shall be required to complete a course in~~

- Basics of Preaching.

~~b. — Once a deacon has been ordained, a minimum of five further (four for those going on to ordination as an elder) courses will be required. Deacons may choose from courses in the following areas:~~

- ~~• — Pastoral Care*~~
- ~~• — Worship and Sacraments*~~
- ~~• — Apologetics*~~
- ~~• — Evangelism and Missions*~~
- ~~• — The Gospel Vision for Justice~~
- ~~• — Christian Education & Discipleship~~
- ~~• — Ministering to Children~~
- ~~• — Models of Youth Ministry~~
- ~~• — Church Finance and Administration~~
- ~~• — Ministry in Intercultural Contexts~~

~~Additional courses in Bible or theology~~

~~* required for deacons pastoring a local church/ planning to pursue elder's orders~~

~~These courses will be determined in consultation with the presiding elder (district superintendent) in consideration of the deacon's ministry setting. Failure to complete these additional courses within seven years will result in the deacon being placed on inactive status until the courses are completed.~~

4. *Elders Educational Requirements* — For deacons who wish to pursue elder's orders, a minimum of ~~ten~~fourteen additional courses (beyond the ~~ten~~six already taken for ordination as deacon) will be required.

a. — In addition to all courses required for the office of deacon, courses in the following ~~six~~ten courses will be required prior to ordination as an elder.

- History of Christianity through the Reformation
- History of Christianity, Reformation to the present
- Church Finance and Administration (~~if not already taken~~)
- Systematic Theology
- One elective course in Old Testament
- One elective course in New Testament

Four additional courses must also be completed prior to ordination as an elder from any of the following:~~b. — Following ordination as an elder, courses in additional four areas will be required to complete the educational requirements. These courses may be chosen from among the following areas:~~

- A Theology Elective
- Mission and Church Renewal
- Media and Modern Applications

- Advanced Preaching
- Spiritual Formation
- Philosophy of Religion
- The Gospel Vision for Justice
- Christian Education & Discipleship
- Ministering to Children
- Models of Youth Ministry
- Ministry in Intercultural Contexts
- Additional courses in Bible or theology

c. ~~Failure to complete these additional courses within seven years will result in the elder being placed on inactive status until the courses are completed.~~

5. Recommended Educational Institutions — A recommended list of schools for ministry education, including non-degree certificate of pastoral studies programs, will be maintained by the Commission on Ministry and Higher Education. Candidates for ordination are strongly encouraged to choose from the list of recommended institutions to complete educational requirements for ordination; however, candidates may complete their educational requirements at any accredited educational institution, including institutions not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list. The Commission on Ministry and Higher Education must approve courses to fulfill the educational requirement for Methodist Theology and Denominational History and Polity. The Commission on Ministry and Higher Education will recommend competencies and courses for ministerial training, as well as establish standards for and supervise approved non-degree certificate of pastoral studies programs in conjunction with the annual conference boards of ministry.
6. A Committee on Global Education shall be formed as a part of the Commission on Ministry and Higher Education that shall serve to encourage and connect Wesleyan theological education in the varying regions around the world, ensuring consistent standards for training clergy that align with the missional and theological aims of the Global Methodist Church.

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7. Continuing Education for Clergy — Following ordination as a deacon or elder, those called into ministry are encouraged to continue learning throughout their lifetimes by means of classes, retreats, seminars, and study leaves on at least an annual basis wherever possible.
8. Certification of Classes and Non-Degree Certificate of Pastoral Studies Programs — The Commission on Ministry and Higher Education will determine whether courses at a given institution meet the requirements listed in this paragraph. Each annual conference board of ministry shall certify that the courses taken by a person correspond sufficiently to these areas.
9. Changes in Requirements — In the event of a change in educational requirements within the Global Methodist Church, candidates in process shall be allowed to complete their educational program as per the requirements specified in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (including the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*) in effect at the time they began their studies, provided that the candidate demonstrates adequate progress towards the completion of their education.
5. ~~The Transitional Commission on Higher Education and Ministry will determine whether courses at a given institution meet the requirements listed in this paragraph. Each annual conference board of ministry shall certify that the courses taken by a person correspond sufficiently to these areas.~~

PARAGRAPH	409
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition eliminates the deacon's level knowledge examination and consistent with amendments to paragraph 407 requires all deacon educational requirements to be met before ordination.

¶ 409. ORDINATION AS DEACON. Within the Global Methodist Church, certified candidates must first be ordained as deacons and, after ordination as deacons, may be ordained as elders.

1. *Ordination Questions* — Upon completion of the educational requirements of ~~¶ 406.2b and ¶407.3a,~~ and passing a deacon's level knowledge examination in doctrine, history, discipline, and Bible, a candidate for ordination as deacon shall be interviewed by the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. During Prior to the interview, the candidates shall be asked to respond in writing to such interview, the candidate shall be asked the following questions:
 - (a) *What is your personal experience of God?*
 - (b) *What is your understanding of evil?*
 - (c) *What is your understanding of grace?*
 - (d) *How do you understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers and in the Church?*
 - (e) *What is your understanding of the Kingdom of God?*
 - (f) *What significance do you believe that the resurrection holds?*
 - (g) *What is your understanding of the nature and authority of Scripture?*

- (h) *What is your understanding of the nature and mission of the Church?*
- (i) *What gifts and graces do you bring to the work of ministry?*
- (j) *What is the meaning of ordination?*
- (k) *What is the role and significance of the sacraments?*
- (l) *Have you studied our form of church discipline and polity and will you support and maintain it?*
- (m) *For the sake of the church's witness, are you willing to dedicate yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life, exercising self-control in your personal habits, integrity in all of your relationships and if married, fidelity in your covenant with your spouse, or if single, chastity in your personal conduct?*

In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list (¶407.5), the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church.

The annual conference board of ministry shall likewise evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church.

2. The annual conference board of ministry or equivalent will interview the candidate for readiness for ordination as a deacon. After being interviewed and recommended by the annual conference board of ministry by a two-thirds vote and approved by a two-thirds vote of the clergy of the annual conference in executive session and by the bishop, a certified candidate shall become a full member of the annual conference and be ordained as deacon by the bishop through the laying on of hands.
3. Deacons are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters except the ordination and conference relation of elders. Deacons not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall have no voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418.

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4. Deacons may be appointed to serve as part of a ministry team in a local church (including as a pastor) or another ministry setting by the bishop, or they may secure their own position with the approval and appointment of the bishop. Deacons may continue to serve as a deacon indefinitely under appointment by the bishop and are encouraged to continue their education in regard to whatever ministry specialty they are called to pursue.
- ~~5. Deacons shall meet minimum educational requirements at the time of ordination as determined by this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (¶ 406.2b, c). Following ordination, deacons must fulfill the additional educational requirements established for deacons in ¶ 407.3b within seven (7) years. Deacons who do not complete all educational requirements within the allotted time shall be classified as inactive until such educational requirements are completed.~~
65. Deacons considering a call to ordination as an elder, or in whom the gifts and graces for the ministry of elder are recognized by a bishop or presiding elder (district superintendent), may be appointed to the office of pastor in a local church. If such an appointment is more than a temporary assignment, a deacon who accepts such an appointment must declare candidacy for ordination as an elder and begin the process toward such ordination following the completion of all educational requirements as a deacon.

PARAGRAPH 410

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE Consistent with changes proposed in paragraph 407, this petition changes paragraph 410 to require completion of all educational requirements to be ordained elder prior to such ordination.

¶ 410. ORDINATION AS ELDER.

1. Deacons who desire to be ordained as an elder shall declare their candidacy for such ordination to the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. They shall be eligible for ordination as elder once they:
 - a. Prove themselves faithful, mature, and effective over a period of a minimum of two years' service as a deacon;
 - b. Complete the educational requirements for ordination as an elder specified in ¶ 407.4a.
 - c. Pass an advanced level examination in doctrine, history, discipline and Bible;
 - d. Be interviewed and recommended by a two-thirds vote of the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent for ordination as an elder. In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church. The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church; and
 - e. Be approved by two-thirds vote by the elders of the annual conference in executive session and be approved by the bishop.

-
- ~~2. The additional educational requirements specified in ¶ 407.4b must be completed within seven (7) years of ordination as elder. Persons who do not complete such requirements in a timely manner shall be ineligible thereafter to serve in the office of pastor of a local church but may continue to serve in other capacities as a deacon.~~
23. Elders are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters. An elder not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall not have voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418. Elders may be appointed by the bishop as a presiding elder (district superintendent), to local ministry as pastor in charge, to the staff of a local church, as a chaplain, as an evangelist, or to other ministry settings. Elders are eligible to be elected to the office of bishop.

PETITION 133

TASK FORCE TO REVISE THE GENERAL RULES

PARAGRAPH RESOLUTION
COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER DR. DAVID F. WATSON - DAYTON, OH
ORGANIZATION STILLWATER METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The General Rules are an important part of our Methodist heritage. However, they were developed for the particular context of 18th century Methodists. There are important differences and new challenges facing Global Methodists in our various contexts around the world today.

This project seeks to preserve the spirit of the General Rules in a way that truly fits our current global contexts.

Under the authority of this General Conference “to recommend forming working groups or task forces to develop proposals for a future General Conference” (Plan of Organization V.C), the 2024 General Conference hereby calls on the _Assembly of Bishops_ to form a task force which shall submit appropriate legislation to the next General Conference, including but not necessarily limited to any needed amendments to Book of Doctrines and Discipline Paragraphs 108, 109, and 204, in order to produce revised General Rules of the Global Methodist Church.

This Task Force shall seek to produce revised General Rules that honor and continue the core values of the historic General Rules found in Paragraph 108 while better addressing today’s realities, being intentionally globally applicable, and focusing on commitments we realistically expect all of our clergy to actually keep when they promise at their ordinations to “keep the General Rules of our Church” (TBDD Paragraph 408.7).

This task force’s membership shall include relevant theological scholars, at least one bishop or interim bishop, other deacons and elders, and laypeople. It shall include international, cultural, and other forms of diversity. The task force shall seek broad input to develop consensus around the content for the new General Rules of the Global Methodist Church.

PARAGRAPH	419
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Consistent with changes proposed in paragraph 407, this petition changes paragraph 410 to require completion of all educational requirements to be ordained elder prior to such ordination.

AMENDMENT OF PARAGRAPH 419

¶ 419. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.

1. Clergy who are current or former ordained members of The United Methodist Church may apply to the ~~Transitional Leadership Council (¶ 703.2h) or a body that it designates~~ an annual conference board of ministry to be received as clergy members of the Global Methodist Church and to have their ordained status recognized. The application shall be accompanied by a copy of the applicant's ordination certificate(s) and shall include ~~an explicit~~ a written affirmation of the doctrines and Social Witness set forth in ~~this Transitional~~ the Book of Doctrines and Discipline and an agreement to abide by its discipline. The applicant shall consent to a background check. ~~The Transitional Leadership Council or the body it designates~~ annual conference board of ministry; shall review the application and vote on each application received. An affirmative vote on each application shall result in the applicant being recommended to the annual conference clergy session for a vote. If the clergy session votes in the affirmative, the applicant is admitted to clergy membership and granted ordained status within the Global Methodist Church. The annual conference board of ministry may approve clergy between sessions of the annual conference. ~~admitted to clergy membership in the Global Methodist Church and recognition of the applicant's ordained status in the Global Methodist Church.~~
2. Current or Former Associate Members and Licensed Local Pastors in The United Methodist Church.

- a. Persons who are current or former associate members or licensed local pastors in The United Methodist Church may apply for clergy membership in the Global Methodist Church and to be ordained as a deacon or elder. Each application shall be evaluated by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council body(ies) designated~~ annual conference board of ministry or a subgroup thereof for that purpose. The application must include a copy of the certificate or license from the person's service in The United Methodist Church, a transcript of courses completed to meet the requirements of ¶ 407, and a ~~declaration that the applicant affirms~~ written affirmation of the doctrines and Social Witness set forth in ~~this Transitional Book~~ the Book of Doctrines and Discipline, agrees and agreement to abide by its discipline. Those meeting the qualifications for ordination as deacons or elders set forth in this chapter shall, with the recommendation of the annual conference board of ministry and subsequent approval by the annual conference ~~approval of the Transitional Leadership Council or the body(ies) designated by it~~ be ordained at a designated service of the annual conference convened for that purpose. If an associate member or a licensed local pastor meets the educational requirements to be ordained as an elder and has served in The United Methodist Church for at least two years, the two-year period of minimum service as a deacon in ¶ 410.1.a shall not be applicable and the person shall may immediately be ordained as a deacon and then as an elder ~~at the same annual conference session following approval by its clergy session. If approved by the annual conference board of ministry and the clergy session, an individual may be ordained deacon and elder at the same annual conference session.~~
- b. Those current or former licensed local pastors in The United Methodist Church not meeting the qualifications for ordination as a deacon or elder in the Global Methodist Church may be granted a license by the annual conference board of ministry subject to approval by the annual conference clergy session by action of the Transitional Leadership Council as a transitional local pastor for a one-year term. The status of a transitional local pastor begins from the date of their approval at the annual conference session and must be approved yearly by the annual conference board of ministry, with extensions up to four years in total, renewable for two additional years by the board of ministry of the annual conference in which they are appointed, while they work toward meeting the qualifications for ordination as a deacon in the Global Methodist Church, provided that they are appointed to pastor a local church. After the second renewal of the license, if the person has not met the qualifications for ordination as a deacon,

~~their authority to pastor a local church shall cease. The license shall terminate if the person ceases to be appointed as pastor of a local church. The clergy status as a local pastor under this paragraph is limited to the circumstances described here, is transitional in nature, and shall cease to exist following the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church. A pastor operating under a license granted under this provision shall be a clergy member of the Global Methodist Church while licensed, shall have sacramental authority in their appointment, and shall have full voice and vote on all matters except the ordination and conference relations of deacons and elders. Such a person shall be under the supervision of the board of ministry of the annual conference in which they are appointed, and a supervising elder appointed by a president-presiding elder, a president pro tem conference superintendent, or a bishop. The opportunity to apply for status as a transitional local pastor will expire on December 31, 2026.~~

3. Clergy will be placed in the annual conference in which their appointment is located or may transfer to a different annual conference in the connection. The clergy person will be subject to the bishop of that annual conference for appointment. ~~Prior to the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church, it is expected that the appointments of clergy serving congregations in which both transition into the Global Methodist Church will be retained, unless a change is needed because of illness, family situation, death, the election of senior status, clergy misconduct, or the financial exigencies of the congregation.~~
4. Persons in the candidacy process in The United Methodist Church who desire to affiliate with the Global Methodist Church ~~prior to its convening conference shall~~ may be received into an annual conference after recommendation by the annual conference board of ministry to the annual conference clergy session, or by the annual conference board of ministry between annual conference sessions. ~~or the Transitional Leadership Council designated body handling candidates.~~ The candidate shall comply with the provisions of ¶ 406 and their membership in a congregation of The United Methodist Church for at least one year shall satisfy the membership requirement of ¶ 406. The candidate shall request that a copy of all candidacy files held by their former district or annual conference be forwarded to the body credentialing candidates. Where such documentation is not released by another denomination, the annual conference board of ministry, or subgroup thereof, shall verify the status of the candidate with whatever documentation is available. Candidates shall continue at the point in the process where they are in The United Methodist

~~Church. Candidates and~~ will not need to repeat steps or requirements they have already completed, ~~continuing. Candidates will continue in~~ their candidacy process according to the requirements listed in this chapter, provided that candidates may choose to be governed by the processes outlined in the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* in effect at the time of their candidacy. Candidates eligible to be ordained under the qualifications of this chapter may move toward ordination at the next annual conference session under the processes laid out in this chapter.

5. Clergy who have been recognized and ordained in churches following an episcopal (bishop's) or presbyterial (elders) system of governance may be received into the Global Methodist Church by recognition of their ordination. Clergy coming from congregational systems in which their ordination was performed by a local church or congregation will apply for ordination within the Global Methodist Church as a part of their transfer.
6. The Transitional Leadership Council or its designee may in its sole discretion grant exceptions to the requirements upon petition of a person seeking certification as a candidate or conference membership and ordination during the period preceding the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church. If circumstances arise that are not defined in this paragraph, the annual conference board of ministry may appeal to the Commission on Ministry and Higher Education on behalf of an applicant for clarification, with the Commission retaining the final authority in matters of the transitional status of clergy within the Global Methodist Church.

PARAGRAPH	414
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition provides specifics of how someone is recognized as an Evangelist in the Global Methodist Church.

¶ 414. EVANGELISTS. ~~The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint a provisional endorsing board to encourage the work of evangelists in the Global Methodist Church that shall report to the TLC to fulfill the following ministry objectives and requirements: (1) evaluate applications and recommend persons to the ministry and office of evangelist, (2) provide professional and pastoral support and accountability by those appointed to serve in evangelistic ministry settings, (3) interpret and advocate for those serving such appointments to bishops, annual conferences, and local congregations, (4) work to identify quality continuing education opportunities for those appointed as evangelists, and (5) liaison with other faith groups, evangelistic organizations, colleges, theological seminaries and conferences to share the vision and opportunities for evangelists.~~

THE MINISTRY OF EVANGELISTS. Evangelism is the persuasive communication of the good news of Jesus Christ and His present and coming Kingdom in word, deed and sign as an invitation to repent and believe in the crucified and risen Lord Jesus, the one true and living God. Effective evangelism leads people to call on Jesus as Savior and Lord and experience the new birth (Mark 1:15, Luke 24:19-32, Acts 2:22-47, Romans 10:9, John 3:3- 8). While every follower of Jesus is commanded to go and share the good news of Jesus Christ, God also calls and gives to the Church some who are specifically anointed and gifted as evangelists (Ephesians 4:11-13). These lay and clergy persons are effective at leading people to saving faith and equipping others in the body of Christ to evangelize and accelerate the spread of the Gospel. All believers need to be connected to a local church; to be sanctified, and formed into disciples who can make disciples. (Matthew 4:19, Ephesians 4:11-13, Acts 8:4-40, Acts 21:8, Matthew 16:13-19, Matthew 28:18-20)

1. *Certification of Lay and Clergy Evangelists* — Certification as an evangelist in the Global Methodist Church is approved and monitored at the local church level with additional accountability and monitoring for clergy evangelists by the annual conference board of ministry. The standards for certification include the following:

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- a. Anyone who desires to serve as an evangelist must effectively communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God, their conversion to Christ, as well as God’s call to this ministry. The Global Methodist Church recognizes and celebrates both lay and clergy evangelists.
- b. Each candidate must bear fruit, showing that God has empowered them with gifts to lead others to saving faith in Christ and to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- c. Each candidate must embrace and affirm the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the Global Methodist Church and have been a member of a Global Methodist Church for one year before seeking the official role of evangelist or the equivalent.
- d. Each candidate must receive the endorsement of his or her local church by a vote of the church council, and also the endorsement of the conference board of evangelism or the equivalent within the annual conference. Clergy evangelists must additionally receive the endorsement of their annual conference board of ministry.
- e. Evangelists must work closely with local churches in a team approach to evangelistic ministry so that new Christians are formed as mature disciples of Jesus Christ who also make disciples.
- f. Lay and clergy evangelists must submit an annual ministry report, including any continuing education to their charge conference, and to the annual conference board of evangelism or the equivalent. In addition, clergy evangelists must also report annually to the annual conference board of ministry.
2. Appointment of Deacons and Elders as Evangelists — Evangelists who meet the criteria as a deacon or elder may be appointed as an evangelist according to the requirements of ¶ 510.9.
- Individuals to be appointed to positions outside and beyond the ministry of the local church shall be confirmed annually by the clergy session of the annual conference.

PARAGRAPH	416
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This petition creates a role as lay and clergy missionary in the church and provides criteria and the process for setting individuals part for such a role.

¶ 416. MISSIONARIES. Throughout the history of the church there have been individuals called by God and sent by the Church to share the good news of Jesus across cultures; to make disciples in distant places and among less evangelized peoples; and to equip emerging Christian communities for growth, faith-sharing, and good works in Jesus' name (Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 15:20, Acts 1:8, Romans 10:13-15, Ephesians 4:11-14, Ephesians 2:8-10). Ambassadors of Christ, these are vocational missionaries, called to bring the message of peace and reconciliation with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:11-15).

1. Qualifications and the Commissioning of Lay and Clergy Missionaries — Commissioning to the office of missionary in the Global Methodist Church is approved and monitored by the annual conference board of ministry.
 - a. Anyone who desires to serve as a GM Church missionary must communicate God's call on their lives to cross- cultural vocational ministry. The Global Methodist Church recognizes and celebrates both lay and clergy missionaries.
 - b. Each candidate must be able to testify to the Good News of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God as well as his or her conversion to Christ.
 - c. Each candidate must bear fruit, showing that God has empowered them with gifts to lead others to saving faith in Christ, to make disciples of Jesus Christ, and a commitment to making disciples who make disciples.

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- d. Each candidate must embrace and affirm the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the Global Methodist Church, with a commitment to the practices of spiritual disciplines, and patterns of holiness consistent with the *General Rules*.
 - e. Each candidate must be a member in good standing of a Global Methodist Church for at least one year prior to seeking the official role of a GM Church missionary.
 - f. Each candidate must have received training for (1) cross-cultural missions (such as *Perspectives*, or comparable training as approved by the annual conference board of ministry); (2) Old and New Testament; (3) evangelism, and (4) equipping for disciple-making (such as *Discover Bible Study* methodology and an introduction to Disciple Making Movements).
 - g. Each candidate must receive the endorsement of his or her local church by a vote of the church council, and also the endorsement of the annual conference missions committee or the equivalent. Clergy missionaries must additionally receive the endorsement of their annual conference board of ministry.
 - h. Each candidate shall provide evidence as to the means by which he or she will receive ongoing pastoral / member care and support, to ensure personal and family well-being while in their field of service.
 - i. Be serving with (and under the oversight of) an approved GM Church ministry or an approved GM Church missional partner as determined by the Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church or its designee.
2. *Appointment of Deacons and Elders as Missionaries* — Missionaries who meet the criteria as a deacon or elder may be appointed as a missionary according to the requirements of ¶ 510.9. Individuals to be appointed to positions outside and beyond the ministry of the local church shall be confirmed annually by the clergy session of the annual conference.

Renumber subsequent paragraphs in Part Four

PETITION 139

EDITORIAL PETITION TO DELETE ¶109

PARAGRAPH 109

COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE This paragraph is now included in the proposed Constitution.

¶109. THE RESTRICTIVE RULE. In continuity with our Wesleyan heritage, the governing body of the Global Methodist Church shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion or Confession of Faith, or establish any new standards of rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine.

PARAGRAPH 349

COMMITTEE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 349. LOCAL CHURCH CONNECTIONAL FUNDING

7. The Transitional Leadership Council or its designee annual conference connectional council or its equivalent may designate a local church as a missional church and exempt such a church from paying general church or annual conference connectional funding for up to five years from the date of designation. Missional churches shall be church plants, church re-starts, or churches located in or serving economically disadvantaged communities.
9. The failure of a local church to remit connectional funding in full as calculated annually may result in the ~~Transitional Leadership Council or designee~~ annual conference connectional council or its equivalent proceeding under ~~¶¶~~ 354 to involuntarily disaffiliate the local church from the Global Methodist Church.

PETITION 142

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶350

PARAGRAPH	350
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is necessary because of the elimination of the role of president pro tempore and the creation of the role of conference superintendent.

¶ 350. ORGANIZATION OF A NEW CHURCH.

2. Each annual conference shall determine the criteria required for the chartering of a new local church.

The ~~president pro tempore~~ conference superintendent shall designate the district to which the new church shall belong.

PARAGRAPH	354
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 354. CONGREGATIONAL FIDELITY. Central to the integrity of both local congregations and the Global Methodist Church as a whole, the doctrines and discipline of the denomination as outlined in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* shall be voluntarily and joyfully embraced and practiced by all. Additionally, local congregations covenant to provide connectional funding as set forth in ¶ 349. Congregations that for reason of conscience find themselves unable to do so are accordingly encouraged to affiliate with another Christian denomination more in keeping with their beliefs or practices or disaffiliate from the Global Methodist Church under the provisions of ¶ 903. Should a congregation consistently advance doctrines or engage in practices not in conformity with this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or fail to remit in full the connectional funding set forth in ¶ 349, the ~~Transitional Leadership Council or its successor~~ the annual conference connectional council or its equivalent shall have the authority to effectuate such a change independently, provided that the following provisions are met:

4. If a resolution of the disagreement proves unattainable or the local church does not remit its connectional funding in full following the meeting with the presiding elder, the local church may be involuntarily disaffiliated from the Global Methodist Church by a two-thirds vote of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council or its successor~~ annual conference connectional council or its equivalent, by agreement of the bishop, and by an affirmative vote of the presiding elders of the conference in which the local church is located.

PARAGRAPH	355
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 355. LOCAL CONGREGATIONS ALIGNING WITH THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH.

1. Local congregations formerly aligned with The United Methodist Church may align with the Global Methodist Church through an affirmative vote by the professing members of the congregation present and voting at a duly authorized church conference. The church council shall notify the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ annual conference connectional council or its equivalent of their decision. The affirmative vote must be to endorse the doctrinal standards and Social Witness (¶¶ 101-202) in this *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines* and express a desire to be connected and accountable to this church.
2. Other Christian congregations who desire to be connected and accountable to the Global Methodist Church may request to align upon an affirmative majority vote of a congregational meeting to endorse the doctrinal standards and Social Witness (¶¶ 101-202) in this *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*. It is the responsibility of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ annual conference connectional council or its equivalent to verify the legality of the process used by the local congregation and the congregation's viability prior to their request being approved.
3. ~~The Transitional Leadership Council shall serve the local church by ensuring all congregations in the Global Methodist Church have: an annual conference and district to which they belong, appropriate supervision, pastoral appointments, and the opportunity to elect through its annual conference delegates to the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church. Congregations shall function in their annual conferences and districts under this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Beginning on the effective date of affiliation, local churches shall forward connectional funding to~~

the Global Methodist Church ~~under processes established by the Transitional Leadership Councils~~
provided in ¶ 349.

4. Where both a local church and its pastor affiliate with the Global Methodist Church and both desire to continue the pastoral assignment, the ~~Transitional Leadership Council and the bishop in charge~~
providing episcopal oversight for the annual conference to which the church relates will seek to maintain the current clergy appointment for the sake of stability and continuity in this time of transition.
5. The effective date of local churches under ¶ 355.1-3 shall be the date established by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~
annual conference connectional council or its equivalent of the annual conference to which the local church relates.

PARAGRAPH	403
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because we are no longer operating in the period prior to the convening General Conference.

¶ 403. ORDERS OF MINISTRY. Clergy are those who have been called out from among God’s people for particular service to His church. A calling from God may take many expressions and come at any age in the life of an individual. Scripture bears witness to both the young (1 Samuel 3) and those who are older (Genesis 12 and Exodus 3) being summoned by God into His work, as well as men and women, and those whose encounters with God were sudden and dramatic and those whose call may have been more gradual, naturally unfolding over a period of many years. In addition to those specifically charged with preaching and teaching (1 Peter 5:1-4), the early church also set apart seven disciples who were “full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom” to distribute food to the widows among them (Acts 6:1-6). Individuals such as Stephen, Phoebe, and Timothy, served in various ways to benefit the people of God. Whether a deacon or elder, all clergy are required to live lives of integrity and self-control as they hold fast to the mystery of faith (1 Tim. 3:1-13).

Following the historic practice of Methodism, those who serve as clergy within the Global Methodist Church shall be both elected by their peers and ordained by the bishop on behalf of the whole church. Election is the action by which the clergy of an annual conference, after carefully examining the qualifications, abilities, and readiness of a candidate for ministry, incorporate individuals into the membership of the covenant fellowship of those called to serve the church. Election carries with it the right to vote and participate in the business of an annual conference provided the person is under appointment or senior clergy who meet the qualifications of ¶ 418. ~~During the period prior to the convening General Conference, u~~Under the provisions of ¶ 419.2a, transitional local pastors who have been approved for ordination as elders or deacons shall be clergy under this paragraph and have the right to vote and participate in the business of an annual conference. ~~During the period prior to the convening General Conference, t~~Those persons licensed as transitional local pastors under ¶ 419.2b shall

also be clergy under this paragraph and have the right to vote and participate in the business of an annual conference, except as limited by ¶419.2b. Ordination is the action by which the church sets apart those who have been so elected to a particular order of ministry for the good of the whole church. Ordination is conferred by the laying on of hands by a bishop and others among the people of God in conference. There are two orders of clergy:

PARAGRAPH	407
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The amendment is necessary to conform the name of the commission to the name used elsewhere in the Book of Doctrines and Discipline.

¶ 407. EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ORDINATION.

2. *Recommended Educational Institutions* — A recommended list of schools for ministry education will be maintained by the Commission on Ministry and Higher Education. Candidates for ordination are strongly encouraged to choose from the list of recommended institutions to complete educational requirements for ordination; however, candidates may complete their educational requirements at any accredited educational institution, including institutions not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list. The Commission on Ministry and Higher Education must approve courses to fulfill the educational requirement for Methodist Theology and Denominational History and Polity. The Commission on Ministry and Higher Education will recommend competencies and courses for ministerial training, as well as establish standards for and supervise approved alternative educational pathways in conjunction with the annual conference boards of ministry.
5. The Commission on ~~Higher Education~~ and Ministry and Higher Education will determine whether courses at a given institution meet the requirements listed in this paragraph. Each annual conference board of ministry shall certify that the courses taken by a person correspond sufficiently to these areas.

PETITION 147

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶411

PARAGRAPH	411
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 411. **MINISTERIAL TRAINING FUND.** A fund shall be maintained for ministerial education by the ~~Transitional Leadership~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church. Once certified, a candidate may request a loan to assist with educational requirements. A service commitment of five years duration after ordination is required of any clergy who receives such assistance, with twenty percent of the loan amount forgiven for each year of ministry within the Global Methodist Church.

PETITION 148

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶504

PARAGRAPH	504
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 504. SPECIFIC RESIDENTIAL DUTIES.

10. Transfer, upon the request of the receiving bishop, clergy member(s) of one annual conference to another, provided said member(s) agrees to said transfer; and to send immediately to the secretaries of both conferences involved, to the conference Boards of Ministry, and to ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ the Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church or its designee, written notices of the transfer of members.

PARAGRAPH C - 204 ARTICLE VI.4
COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER TRINITY CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE The current wording specifies that clergy delegates must actually be current members of the Global Methodist Church but there is no such stipulation for lay delegates.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE VI, Section 4

Article VI. Annual Conferences — Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability. The Annual Conference shall be composed of clergy, both active and retired, as well as an equal number of lay members elected by each charge or by the district or conference. Each charge shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are appointed clergy.

In addition to coming together for edification, fellowship, and inspiration, the Annual Conference shall be charged with the following responsibilities:

1. To create a program of ministry within its area that can fulfill the mission of the church and enhance its witness, including forming such commissions or agencies as may be required, specifying the composition of each body and electing the members thereof.
2. To determine and administer a program for raising and distributing funds necessary to conduct the work and mission of the Church in its region.
3. To establish the number of districts within the annual conference.
4. To elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference as per the number determined by the General Conference. Clergy delegates shall be members in full connection in good standing who have served a minimum of two years preceding their election. Lay delegates shall ~~have been~~ be current professing members of the Global Methodist Church, with ~~professing members of the Global Methodist Church, or its predecessors, for at least two years preceding their election.~~

membership in the GMC or its predecessor denomination for at least two years preceding their election.

Both clergy and lay delegates shall be elected by a minimum of fifty percent of votes cast plus one with clergy voting for clergy delegates and laity voting for lay delegates.

PARAGRAPH 419

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER DR. BURT PALMER - KINGWOOD, TX

ORGANIZATION TRINITY CONFERENCE

RATIONALE The GMC needs to extend the time for TLP's to enter the GMC and extend the time to complete the necessary educational requirements. Supervision of the process is under the guidance of the Board of Ministry. There is also a need to define the end of the transitional period, which is 12/31/2026. The TLP status is not determined by appointment but by the additional 3 years to complete the educational requirements for Deacon. This retains the best of the transitional status to serve churches.

¶ 419. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.

The opportunity to apply to the Global Methodist Church under the provisions of ¶ 419 will expire on December 31, 2026.

1. Clergy who are current or former ordained members of The United Methodist Church may apply to the Transitional Leadership Council (¶ 703.2h) or a body that it designates to be an annual conference Board of Ministry to be received as clergy members of the Global Methodist Church and to have their ordained status recognized. The application shall be accompanied by a copy of the applicant's ordination certificate(s) and shall include a written affirmation of the ~~d~~Doctrines and Social Witness set forth in the this Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline of the Global Methodist Church and an agreement to abide by its discipline. The applicant shall consent to a background check. The conference Board of Ministry Transitional Leadership Council or the body it designates, shall review the application and vote on each application received. An affirmative vote on each application shall result in the applicant being admitted to clergy membership in the Global Methodist Church recommended to the Annual Conference Clergy session for a vote. If the Clergy session votes in the affirmative, the applicant is admitted to clergy membership and granted ordained status within the Global Methodist Church. The Board of Ministry may approve clergy between sessions of the Annual Conference.
2. *Current or Former Associate Members and Licensed Local Pastors in The United Methodist Church.*

- a. Persons who are current or former associate members or licensed local pastors in The United Methodist Church may apply for clergy membership in the Global Methodist Church and to be ordained as a deacon or elder. Each application shall be evaluated by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council or body(ies) designated for that purpose~~ Annual Conference Board of Ministry or a subgroup thereof. The application must include a copy of the certificate or license from the person's service in The United Methodist Church, a transcript of courses completed to meet the requirements of ¶ 407, and a written affirmation of declaration that the applicant affirms the d-Doctrines and Social Witness set forth in *The this Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline of the Global Methodist Church* and agrees-agreement to abide by its discipline. Those meeting the qualifications for ordination as deacons or elders set forth in this chapter shall, with the recommendation of the conference Board of Ministry and subsequent approval by the annual conference, of Transitional Leadership Council or the body(ies) designated by it be ordained at a designated service of the Annual Conference, convened for that purpose.

If a current or former associate member or a licensed local pastor in The United Methodist Church meets the educational requirements to be ordained as an elder and has served in The United Methodist Church for at least two years, the two-year period of minimum service as a deacon in ¶ 410.1.a shall not be applicable and the person ~~may shall immediately~~ be ordained as a deacon and ~~then as an elder at the same annual conference session~~ following approval by its clergy session. If approved by the Board of Ministry and the clergy session of the annual conference, an individual may be ordained Deacon and Elder at the same annual conference session.

- b. Those current or former licensed local pastors in The United Methodist Church not meeting the qualifications for ordination as a deacon or elder in the Global Methodist Church may be granted a license ~~by action of the Transitional Leadership Council~~ as a Transitional Local Pastor for a one-year term. The status of a Transitional Local Pastor begins from the date of their approval at the Annual Conference Session and must be approved annually by the annual conference Board of Ministry, with extensions for up to three additional years, provided that they are appointed to pastor a local church. The clergy status as a local pastor under this paragraph ~~is limited to the circumstances described here, is transitional in nature, and shall cease to exist following the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church.~~ A

pastor operating under a license granted under this provision shall be a clergy member of the Global Methodist Church while licensed, shall have sacramental authority in their appointment, and shall have full voice and vote on all matters except the ordination and conference relations of deacons and elders. Such a person shall be under the supervision of the Board of Ministry of the annual conference in which they are appointed, and a supervising elder appointed by a ~~president elder~~, a president pro tempore or a bishop. The Board of Ministry may approve persons for Transitional Local Pastor status between annual conference sessions.

3. Clergy will be placed in the annual conference in which their appointment is located or may transfer to a different annual conference in the connection. The clergy person will be subject to the bishop of that annual conference for appointment. ~~Prior to the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church, it is expected that the appointments of clergy serving congregations in which both transition into the Global Methodist Church will be retained, unless a change is needed because of illness, family situation, death, the election of senior status, clergy misconduct, or the financial exigencies of the congregation.~~
4. Persons in the candidacy process in The United Methodist Church who desire to affiliate with the Global Methodist Church ~~prior to its convening conference shall~~ may be received by into an annual conference after recommendation by the Board of Ministry to the annual conference clergy session, or by the Board of Ministry between annual conference sessions. ~~the annual conference board of ministry or the Transitional Leadership Council designated body handling candidates.~~ The candidate shall comply with the provisions of ¶ 406 and their membership in a congregation of The United Methodist Church for at least one year shall satisfy the membership requirement of ¶ 406. The candidate shall request that a copy of all candidacy files held by their former district or annual conference be forwarded to the body credentialing candidates. Where such documentation is not released by another denomination, the annual conference Board of Ministry, or subgroup thereof, shall verify the status of the candidate with whatever documentation is available. Candidates shall continue at the point in the process where they are in The United Methodist Church. ~~Candidates and will not need to repeat steps or requirements they have already completed, continuing. Candidates will continue~~ in their candidacy process according to the requirements listed in this chapter, provided that candidates may choose to be governed by the processes outlined in the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* in effect at the time their

candidacy began. Candidates eligible to be ordained under the qualifications of this chapter may move toward ordination at the next annual conference session under the processes laid out in this chapter.

5. Clergy who have been recognized and ordained in churches following an episcopal (bishop's) or presbyterial (elders) system of governance may be received into the Global Methodist Church by recognition of their ordination. Clergy coming from congregational systems in which their ordination was performed by a local church or congregation will apply for ordination within the Global Methodist Church as a part of their transfer.
- ~~6.5. The Transitional Leadership Council or its designee may in its sole discretion grant exceptions to the requirements upon petition of a person seeking certification as a candidate or conference membership and ordination during the period preceding the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church. If circumstances arise that are not defined in this paragraph, the annual conference Board of Ministry may appeal to the Commission on Ministry on behalf of an applicant for clarification, with the Commission retaining the final authority in matters of the transitional status of clergy within the Global Methodist Church.~~

Rationale:

- **Because the Global Methodist Church continues to grow and receive clergy from our former denomination from across the world, the transitional provisions need to be extended, but with a defined conclusion of the transitional season.**
- **The status of Transitional Local Pastor will retain time limits as stated but the status is not conditional upon an active appointment, which will allow for persons to both complete their education and be appointed to serve local churches where needed.**

PARAGRAPH 407

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The Transitional Commission on Ministry recommends that those seeking to serve as a deacon complete all ten required courses prior to their ordination. This will better equip all for ministry, whether a candidate is in a traditional M.Div. program or in an alternative educational pathway. Prior to ordination, student or supply pastors may still continue to be appointed and serve congregations. Similarly, elders must complete an additional ten courses prior to being ordained as elder.

PETITION RE: PARAGRAPH 407

COMPLETION OF EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS PRIOR TO ORDINATION.

3. *Deacons Educational Requirements* — A total of ten courses (30 credit hours) are required for those ordained as deacons.

a. ~~Courses in the following five areas are required for all persons seeking ordination as a deacon:~~

- ~~• Denominational History and Polity~~

~~In addition, those pastoring a church, or planning to pursue elder's orders shall be required to complete a course in~~

- ~~• Basics of Preaching.~~

b. ~~Once a deacon has been ordained, a minimum of five further (four for those going on to ordination as an elder) courses will be required. Deacons may choose from courses in the following areas:~~

- ~~• Pastoral Care*~~
- ~~• Worship and Sacraments*~~
- ~~• Apologetics*~~
- ~~• Evangelism and Missions*~~

- ~~— The Gospel Vision for Justice~~
- ~~— Christian Education & Discipleship~~
- ~~— Ministering to Children~~
- ~~— Models of Youth Ministry~~
- ~~— Church Finance and Administration~~
- ~~— Ministry in Intercultural Contexts~~
- ~~— Additional courses in Bible or theology~~

~~ required for deacons pastoring a local church/ planning to pursue elder's orders~~*

~~These courses will be determined in consultation with the presiding elder (district superintendent) in consideration of the deacon's ministry setting. Failure to complete these additional courses within seven years will result in the deacon being placed on inactive status until the courses are completed.~~

Candidates may be ordained as a deacon after completing the following ten core classes.

- Introduction to the Old Testament
- Introduction to the New Testament
- Systematic Theology
- Wesleyan Theology and Doctrine
- Methodist History and Polity of Global Methodist Church (Note: polity may be taught instead with Wesleyan Theology and Doctrine)
- Basics of Preaching
- Pastoral Care
- Evangelism and Missions
- Sacraments and Worship Life (or other elective for deacons not serving as pastor of a local church or as a staff member in the area of worship.)

-
- Church Administration and Finance (or other elective for deacons not serving as pastor of a local church)
4. *Elders Educational Requirements* — ~~For deacons who wish to pursue elder's orders, a minimum of ten additional courses (beyond the ten already taken for ordination as deacon) will be required.~~
- a. ~~In addition to all courses required for the office of deacon, courses in the following six courses will be required prior to ordination as an elder.~~
- ~~History of Christianity through the Reformation~~
 - ~~History of Christianity, Reformation to the present~~
 - ~~Church Finance and Administration (if not already taken)~~
 - ~~Systematic Theology~~
 - ~~One elective course in Old Testament~~
 - ~~One elective course in New Testament~~
- b. ~~Following ordination as an elder, courses in additional four areas will be required to complete the educational requirements. These courses may be chosen from among the following areas:~~
- ~~A Theology Elective~~
 - ~~Mission and Church Renewal~~
 - ~~Media and Modern Applications~~
 - ~~Advanced Preaching~~
 - ~~Spiritual Formation~~
 - ~~Philosophy of Religion~~
- c. ~~Failure to complete these additional courses within seven years will result in the elder being placed on inactive status until the courses are completed.~~

Individuals who have completed the courses specified in ¶407.3 and been previously ordained as a deacon may be eligible to be ordained an elder in the Global Methodist Church following the completion of at least ten additional courses, including seven additional required classes as follows:

- History of Christianity from Acts to the Reformation
- History of Christianity from the Reformation to the Present
- Apologetics
- Discipleship and Spiritual Formation
- Christian Leadership and Conflict Resolution
- An additional Old Testament class
- An additional New Testament class

Elective classes may be chosen from among the following areas:

- Mission of the Church and Church Renewal
- Cross-Cultural Evangelism
- Advanced Preaching
- Hebrew or Greek language studies
- Pastoral Counseling
- Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) in a hospital or similar setting
- Philosophy of Religion
- Field Study in Israel
- Theology electives
- Theology of Worship
- Children's or Youth Ministry
- Directed internship or independent study

PETITION 160

TO AMEND ARTICLE II OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 202 ARTICLE II
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	These documents have historically been specifically named as core to who we are as Wesleyans. They give us a proper lens by which to read and understand the Scriptures and traditions of the Church. Furthermore, it was the discharging of these documents from the Doctrines of the United Methodist Church in Judicial Council Decision 1366 which led to the final unraveling of theology within that denomination. A decision we would be wise to avoid in the Global Methodist Church.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article II of the Proposed Constitution¹ of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article II. Doctrinal Foundation — The doctrines of the Church shall be those embraced within the historic creeds of the church, our Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith, [Wesley’s Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament](#), [The Standard Sermons of John Wesley](#), and the core Wesleyan tradition as defined within Part ____ of this Book of Doctrines and Disciplines, with the Holy Scriptures understood to be our primary rule for faith and practice.

PETITION 161

TO AMEND ARTICLE V OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE V
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	Keith Boyette once wrote in his brief for Judicial Council Decision 1366, “The implicit goal of the Constitution is to create and sustain a system which encourages, promotes, and protects the interdependence which is at the heart of connectionalism.” By creating the category of ill-defined, non- enumerated powers, this language constitutionally grants unlimited legislative powers to the General Conference, thereby undermining interdependence within the Church.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article V the Proposed Constitution¹ of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article V. *The General Conference* — As per the Methodist tradition of “conferring together,” there shall be a General Conference of the Global Methodist Church that shall initially meet for a convening General Conference, then as a General Conference approximately two years thereafter. [...] Such special session of the General Conference shall be composed of the delegates to the preceding General Conference or their lawful successors.

The General Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters that are distinctly connectional, ~~including, but not limited to~~ and in the exercise of this power shall have authority as follows:

PETITION 162

TO AMEND ARTICLE V.1 OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE V.1
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	Bishops, both historically in the Wesleyan tradition and currently in proposed ¶502, are elected from among the order of elders. They are elders and not a separate order within the church. This wording now unintentionally creates a category of “bishops” as separate from “elders” which is not supported by the rest of the proposed constitution, the proposed Book of Doctrines and Disciplines, nor by tradition, and therefore should be removed.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article V the Proposed Constitution¹ of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article V. *The General Conference* — As per the Methodist tradition of “conferring together,” there shall be a General Conference of the Global Methodist Church that shall initially meet for a convening General Conference, [...]

1. To define the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of those who serve as deacons, elders, other clergy categories, ~~bishops~~, and other leaders within the Church.

PETITION 163

TO AMEND ARTICLE V.2 OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE V.2
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	Article III of the constitution already defines some of the qualifications of church membership, namely: repentance of sin, profession of faith in Jesus Christ, baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and evincing a sincere desire for a holy life. The proposed language would ensure that the General Conference does not create qualifications that are in conflict with the constitution.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article V the Proposed Constitution¹ of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article V. *The General Conference* — As per the Methodist tradition of “conferring together,” there shall be a General Conference of the Global Methodist Church that shall initially meet for a convening General Conference, [...]

2. To define and establish the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of church membership, which shall be open to all who believe in accordance with Article III of the constitution, irrespective of race, color, ethnic or tribal identity, gender, or disability.

PARAGRAPH	505
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and to conform to the name of certain bodies elsewhere in the Book of Doctrines and Discipline.

¶ 505. COMPENSATION AND SALARY UNIT.

1. The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, and travel and office expenses for bishops serving within the United States shall lie with the annual conference(s) to which he or she has been assigned. Bishops will be considered as employees of their respective annual conference(s). The ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church will establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living and the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area.
2. The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, and travel and office expenses for bishops serving in an episcopal area outside of the United States shall be borne by the general church through partnerships with U.S. annual conferences, though such bishops shall be considered employees of some entity within their episcopal area. The ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church will establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living, the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area, and the currency exchange rate.
3. Each episcopal area within the United States shall partner with one or more episcopal areas elsewhere in the world to provide the necessary funds for the episcopal office within those areas. Such funds will be raised in the U.S. and passed through the general church, designated for that episcopal area. The ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church shall arrange such partnerships based on the financial resources any given U.S. conference can reasonably provide. Where partnerships do not provide adequate resources to cover

the episcopal office costs, general church connectional funding may be used to fund episcopal costs as needed.

4. Costs for episcopal travel outside the episcopal area on behalf of the general church, (e.g., ~~Council of Bishops~~ Assembly of Bishops meetings) shall be paid out of general church funds, not conference partnership funds.

PETITION 165

TO AMEND ARTICLE V.3 OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE V.3
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	This proposed language will insure the protection of our polity at the lowest levels of the Church. With no constitutionally defined checks and balances on the powers and duties of circuits, charge conferences, and congregational meetings, great harm can be done at the local level of the church. As Keith Boyette wrote, "The powers and abilities of each of these entities (charges, districts, and congregations) is regulated and constrained first and foremost by the provisions of the Constitution."

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to "[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change" (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include "the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference" (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article V the Proposed Constitution¹ of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article V. *The General Conference* — As per the Methodist tradition of "conferring together," there shall be a General Conference of the Global Methodist Church that shall initially meet for a convening General Conference, [...]

3. To determine the powers and duties of annual conferences, regional conferences, circuits, charge conferences, congregational meetings, and other connectional associations, allowing where appropriate each such body to adapt structures that may best maximize their mission.

PETITION 166

TO AMEND ARTICLE V.7 OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE V.7
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	One of the pillars of our interconnected polity is that the legislative powers define the executive powers. It is important not only to provide for the selection and discontinuance of members of the episcopacy, but also to define its powers and duties within the order of elders. Furthermore, since members of the episcopacy are elders appointed outside of the confines of an annual conference and local church the responsibility of supporting these elders should fall to the General Conference.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article V the Proposed Constitution¹ of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article V. *The General Conference* — As per the Methodist tradition of “conferring together,” there shall be a General Conference of the Global Methodist Church that shall initially meet for a convening General Conference, [...]

7. To define and fix the powers and duties of members of the episcopacy, provide for the selection, continuance, and discontinuance of members of the episcopacy, ensuring that bishops are accountable to the Church, adopt a plan for the support of the bishops, and to define and establish an Assembly of Bishops.

PETITION 167

TO AMEND ARTICLE V.12 OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE V.12
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	The rituals and the forms and mode of worship, though diverse, should never be in violation of the doctrines protected under our restrictive rules. Neither should they promote anything antithetical to those doctrines. This proposed amendment would ensure that all our rituals and music are uniformly consistent with and accountable to our most sacred doctrines.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article V the Proposed Constitution¹ of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article V. *The General Conference* — As per the Methodist tradition of “conferring together,” there shall be a General Conference of the Global Methodist Church that shall initially meet for a convening General Conference, [...]

12. To approve and revise musical resources and worship rituals of the Church, providing for variations as shall be most helpful to particular contexts worldwide, subject to the limitations of the restrictive rules in Article XI.

PETITION 168

TO AMEND ARTICLE V.14/16 OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH C - 203 ARTICLE V.14/16

COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION

SUBMITTER SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)

ORGANIZATION ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE

RATIONALE We are a constitutional Church. No legislative body ought to, by itself, have power that is not defined and restricted by the Constitution. This proposed amendment would ensure that all legislative work of the General Conference would stay within the confines of the constitution of the church.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article V the Proposed Constitution¹ of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article V. *The General Conference* — As per the Methodist tradition of “conferring together,” there shall be a General Conference of the Global Methodist Church that shall initially meet for a convening General Conference, [...]

14. To act upon petitions received dealing with church organization and polity, and resolutions dealing with non-disciplinary matters subject to the limitations and restrictions of the Constitution of the Church. In order to effectively speak on behalf of the whole church, resolutions shall require the support of three-quarters of the General Conference, and shall remain in effect only until the next General Conference convenes.
16. To enact other legislation as it determines to be helpful to the mission of the Church subject to the limitations and restrictions of the Constitution of the Church.

PARAGRAPH 515

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the operation of the Church after conclusion of the transitional period.

¶ **515. PROVISIONS FOR EPISCOPAL AREAS.** The Transitional Leadership Council General Conference shall determine the number of ~~interim~~ bishops based on missional potential, with consideration given to the following criteria:

1. The number of charge conferences and the number of active clergy in episcopal areas;
2. The geographic size of episcopal areas, measured by the square miles/square kilometers, and the numbers of time zones and nations;
3. The structure of episcopal areas, measured by the number of annual conferences, and the overall church membership in all annual, provisional annual, missionary conferences, and missions in episcopal areas.
4. The existing pattern of superintendency.
5. ~~The number of bishops transferring into the Global Methodist Church who are available for assignment.~~

PETITION 170

TO AMEND ARTICLE VI OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VI
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	It is important for us to constitutionally clarify the enumerated and reserved rights of the bodies of the church. The annual conference has historically been understood as the basic body of the church. Therefore, it ought to have reserved for itself the rights that have not been delegated to the General Conference to ensure it is empowered to do its unique and important mission at the local level of the church while also being a balance to the connexional powers of the General Conference.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article VI the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article VI. Annual Conferences — Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability. The Annual Conference shall be composed of clergy, both active and retired, as well as an equal number of lay members elected by each charge or by the district circuit or conference. Each charge shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are appointed clergy.

In addition to coming together for edification, fellowship, and inspiration, the Annual Conference, which is the basic body of the church, shall have reserved to it all other such rights as have not been delegated to the General Conference under the constitution, and shall be charged with the following responsibilities:

PETITION 171

TO AMEND ARTICLE VI.3 OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VI.3
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	We no longer have districts but circuits, and this amendment shows that change in language.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article VI the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article VI. Annual Conferences — Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability. [...]

3. To establish the number of ~~districts~~ circuits within the annual conference.

PETITION 172

TO ADD ARTICLE VI.12 TO THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VI.12
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	There currently exists no constitutional body authorized to hold elections for regional conferences. This amendment would empower those elections to be held by the annual conference under the restrictions imposed by the regional conference following the stipulations of Article VII.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article VI the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article VI. Annual Conferences — Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability. [...]

12. To elect clergy and lay delegates to regional conferences as directed by the regional conferences.

PETITION 173

TO AMEND ARTICLE VII OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VII
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	Currently the proposed constitution does not have a process for how the time and place of regional conferences is decided. This amendment rectifies that omission. Furthermore, this amendment prevents creating the category of ill-defined, non-enumerated powers. The current language constitutionally grants unlimited legislative powers to the regional conference, thereby undermining interdependence within the Church.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article VII the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article VII. Regional Conferences — With the approval of the General Conference, regional conferences may be established for the purposes of coordinating and conducting the mission of the Church around the world, including within the United States. The regional conferences shall be composed of clergy and lay delegates in equal number from the annual conferences assigned to a regional conference, as determined by the General Conference based on average worship attendance. If a regional conference is established, it shall meet once every six years preceding the General Conference, at such a place and time determined by the preceding respective regional conference or by commissions appointed by them or by the General Conference. The General Conference shall specify the duties and responsibilities of regional conferences, and in the exercise of this power shall have authority as follows ~~which shall include but not be limited to:~~

PETITION 174

TO AMEND ARTICLE VII.4 OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VII.4
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	The General Conference, under Article V.8, is already granted the constitutional right to give oversight and provide governance with these entities. This amendment removes that constitutional conflict.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article VII the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

4. ~~To give oversight or provide governance to institutions related to the Church such as hospitals, schools, or other such entities within the boundaries of the regional Conference.~~

PETITION 175

TO ADD ARTICLE VII.5 TO THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VII.5
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	By creating a legal court at the regional level, the conference can expedite the process of generating legal answers to the business of the regional conference while also reducing the workload of the Connectional Council of Appeals. This amendment both streamlines the process of getting rulings on appeals while also allowing those rulings to be handled on a more local level.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article VII the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

5. To appoint a judicial court to determine legal questions arising on the rules and regulations enacted by the regional conference.

PETITION 176

TO ADD ARTICLE VII.6 TO THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VII.6
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	By creating a legal court at the regional level, the conference can expedite the process of generating legal answers to appeals from clergy at the regional conference while also reducing the workload of the Connectional Council of Appeals. This amendment both streamlines the process of getting rulings on appeals while also allowing those rulings to be handled on a more local level.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article VII the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

6. To appoint a committee on appeals to hear and determine the appeal of elders, deacons, and other clergy categories of that regional conference from the decision of a committee on trial.

PARAGRAPH	516
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the end of the transitional period of the Church.

¶ 516. INTERIM TRANSFERRING BISHOPS.

1. *Transferring Bishops.* A bishop of The United Methodist Church or other autonomous Methodist church may join the Global Methodist Church by clergy transfer. Application to transfer shall include an explicit written affirmation of the doctrines and Social Witness set forth in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (¶¶ 101-202) and an agreement to abide by its discipline. Transferring bishops shall also agree to uphold the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. The bishop's transfer is subject to the approval of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Assembly of Bishops and the Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church. Bishops transferring to the Global Methodist Church shall be available for interim assignment during the period prior to the convening conference to an existing or newly formed episcopal area by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Committee on Episcopacy. ~~The Transitional Leadership Council may assign a retired United Methodist bishop who has joined the Global Methodist Church to serve as an interim bishop of an episcopal area during the period prior to the convening conference.~~

PETITION 178

TO AMEND ARTICLE VIII OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VIII
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	While the appeals process in the TBDD does include the bishop, and Article IX does empower the Judiciary to rule on rulings of law made by bishops, there is neither a constitutional right nor requirement for bishops to issue rulings of law. This amendment mandates the right and responsibility that the rulings must be made. It also stipulates the parameters of how they may be made and the limitations of those rulings.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article VII the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article VIII. *The Episcopacy* — The general superintendency of the Global Methodist Church shall be entrusted to bishops who shall provide spiritual leadership to the church and exercise temporal authority as adopted by the General Conference. Bishops shall be elected as per the procedures established by the General Conference and shall serve at its pleasure to guard the faith, order, unity, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Church.

A bishop presiding over an annual or regional conference shall decide all questions of law coming before the bishop in regular business of a session, provided that such questions be presented in writing and that the decision be recorded in the journal of the conference. Such an episcopal decision shall not be authoritative, except in the pending case, until it shall have been passed upon by the Connectional Council of Appeals. All decisions of law made by each bishop shall be reported in writing annually, with a syllabus of the same, to the Connectional Council on Appeals, which shall affirm, modify, or reverse them.

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE IX
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	Besides simply clarifying the language of this article, this amendment removes the language essentially allowing the Judiciary to reject petitions for appeal coming from approved bodies. Since the Connectional Council of Appeals is the highest level of appeals, it behooves us to not allow the appeals process to be cut short simply because the Council does not grant a petition.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article IX the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article IX. *The Judiciary* — The General Conference shall create a Connectional Council of Appeals, determining the number, terms, and qualifications of its members, as well as their method of election and the filling of any vacancies. All decisions of the Council shall be final.

The Council shall have the following authority and responsibility:

1. To determine the constitutionality or the meaning, application, or effect of any action or decision of the General Conference upon an appeal of one-fifth of the members of that Conference present and voting, or upon a majority of the active episcopal leaders of the church.
2. To determine the constitutionality or the meaning, application, or effect of any action or decision of an Annual or Regional Conference upon an appeal of one-fifth of the members present and voting of that conference.

PETITION 179
TO AMEND ARTICLE IX
OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION
(PAGE 2 OF 2)

3. To review and affirm, modify, or reverse any decision of law made by any bishop.
4. To act upon any petition for appeal seeking a ruling on the constitutionality, meaning, application, or effect of any provision in this Book of Doctrine and Disciplines to any action taken by the General Conference, any of its regional or annual conferences, or commissions or bodies created or authorized by the General, Regional, or Annual Conferences ~~when such petition is granted by the Council.~~
5. To provide for its own methods of organization and procedure.
6. To fulfill such duties and powers in the service of the Church as determined by the General Conference.

PETITION 180

TO AMEND ARTICLE X OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE X
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	The protections of clergy and member rights to trial and appeal have historically been one of the foundational aspects of our constitution. This amendment retains the historic language and clarifies the different rights of clergy and members of the church through the trial and appeals process. In particular, it protects members of the church by ensuring they may be tried by members of local congregations.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article X of the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article X. *Right of Appeal* — The General Conference shall establish for the Church a judicial system that shall guarantee to our clergy the right to trial by a committee and an appeal, and to our members a right to trial before the Church, or by committee, and an appeal.

PETITION 181

TO AMEND ARTICLE XI.1 OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 204 ARTICLE XI.1
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	These documents have historically been specifically named as core to who we are as Wesleyans. They give us a proper lens by which to read and understand the Scriptures and traditions of the Church. Furthermore, it was the discharging of these documents from the Doctrines of the United Methodist Church in JCD 1366, because they were not protected under the restrictive rule, which led to the final unraveling of theology within that denomination. We would be wise to avoid the same mistake.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article XI of the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article XI. *The Restrictive Rule* — In continuity with the Wesleyan tradition and historic expressions of Methodism, the following is adopted as a restrictive rule which may be changed only by a three-fourths vote of the General Conference, followed by the ratification of three- fourths of the membership in the annual conferences world-wide.

1.____ The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion, Confession of Faith, Wesley’s Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament, The Standard Sermons of John Wesley or any other of our doctrinal foundations as established by the Church and embodied within our constitutive standards, or establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our existing standards. This restrictive rule shall not apply to the development of a combined Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith as approved by the church. Any successor document to the Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith shall be adopted by a three-fourths vote of the General Conference.

PETITION 182

TO ADD ARTICLE XI.2 TO THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 204 ARTICLE XI.2
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	These documents have historically been specifically named as core to who we are as Wesleyans. They give us a proper lens by which to read and understand the Scriptures and traditions of the Church. Furthermore, it was the discharging of these documents from the Doctrines of the United Methodist Church in JCD 1366, because they were not protected under the restrictive rule, which led to the final unraveling of theology within that denomination. We would be wise to avoid the same mistake.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendments to Article XI of the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article XI. *The Restrictive Rule* — In continuity with the Wesleyan tradition and historic expressions of Methodism, the following is adopted as a restrictive rule which may be changed only by a three-fourths vote of the General Conference, followed by the ratification of three- fourths of the membership in the annual conferences world-wide.

[...]

- The General Conference shall not do away with the privileges of our clergy right to trial by a committee and of an appeal; neither shall it do away with the privileges of our members of right to trial before the church, or by a committee, and of an appeal.

PETITION 183

TO ADD ARTICLE XIII TO THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 204 ARTICLE XIII
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	Since Circuits are already an established and vital part of our life together in the Global Methodist Church, it behooves us to ensure the continuation of these entities as well as confine its powers within the structure of the broader church through constitutional enumeration.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendment to add a new article to the Proposed Constitution of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article XIII. *Circuits* — There may be organized in an annual conference, circuits composed of such persons and invested with such powers as the General Conference may determine.

PETITION 184

REGIONAL CONFERENCES ELIMINATED

PARAGRAPH 609

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER FIRST METHODIST CHURCH COUNCIL - SILOAM SPRINGS, AR (USA)

ORGANIZATION TRINITY CONFERENCE

RATIONALE Regional Conferences are not a necessary component in the Global Methodist Church. This would strike “regional conferences” throughout the Book of Doctrines and Discipline and eliminates this level of conferencing in the Global Methodist Church.

Section II. The Regional Conferences

~~**¶ 609. REGIONAL CONFERENCES.** The Transitional Leadership Council or the convening General Conference may establish regional conferences for the purposes of coordinating and conducting the mission of the Church around the world. The Transitional Leadership Council or the convening General Conference shall determine the powers, authority, and boundaries of the regional conference. The regional conferences shall be composed of clergy and lay delegates in equal number elected from the annual conferences within each regional conference. General Conference delegates shall also serve as delegates to the regional conference. Where necessary due to conditions that prevent the physical assembling of delegates, the Transitional Leadership Council or the regional college of bishops may, with a two-thirds vote, authorize the conducting of the conference via electronic or other digital means.~~

Additional Editorial Changes to Paragraphs: Strike all references to “regional conferences” throughout the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

PETITION 185

TO ADD ARTICLE XIV TO THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

PARAGRAPH	C - 204 ARTICLE XIV
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	SHREVE COMMUNITY CHURCH - SHREVE, OH (USA)
ORGANIZATION	ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	Since Charge Conferences are already an established and vital part of our life together in the Global Methodist Church, it behooves us to ensure the continuation of these entities as well as confine its powers and elections within the structure of the broader church through constitutional enumeration.

WHEREAS, this General Conference has authority to “[adopt] the proposed limited agenda of the Convening Conference including [...] specific paragraphs in the *TBDD* which are open to amendment or change” (Plan of Organization I. 7).

WHEREAS, the approved specific paragraphs include “the writing of a constitution of the Global Methodist Church for presentation and adoption by the General Conference” (Plan or Organization V.C.3).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Constitution Legislative Committee and the General Conference adopt the following amendment to add a new article to the Proposed Constitution^[1] of the Global Methodist Church with the attached rationale:

Article XIV. Charge Conferences — There shall be organized in each charge a charge conference composed of such persons and invested with such powers as the General Conference shall provide.

Unless the General Conference shall order otherwise, the officers of the church or churches constituting a charge shall be elected by the charge conference or by the professing members of said church or churches at a meeting called for that purpose, as may be arranged by the charge conference, unless election is otherwise required by the local church charters or provincial law.

PARAGRAPH	517
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the end of the transitional period of the Church.

¶ 517. **VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF BISHOP.** A vacancy in the office of bishop may occur due to death, transition to senior status, resignation, administrative or judicial procedure, leave of absence, or medical leave. In case the assignment of a bishop to residential supervision of an episcopal area is terminated by any of the above causes or no bishop is assigned to provide residential supervision, the vacancy shall be filled by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Committee on Episcopacy from among active bishops, bishops emeriti, or by the appointment of a president pro tempore. A president *pro tempore* is an elder given responsibility for residential oversight for that area. A president pro tempore assigned to provide residential oversight for an area must reside in that area, unless the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Committee on Episcopacy grants an exception for missional purposes. If such an exception is granted, the missional purpose must be clearly stated and the exception shall be limited in time, but renewable by further action of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Committee on the Episcopacy.

PETITION 188

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶ 518

PARAGRAPH	518
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the change of name of the Council of Bishops to the Assembly of Bishops.

¶ 518. STATUS OF SENIOR BISHOPS.

1. Bishops may choose senior status (¶ 418) upon approval of a majority of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Committee on Episcopacy. Elders who formerly served as bishops but are not now serving as interim bishops may use the title of “bishop emeritus,” but they will not retain their episcopal responsibilities or membership on the ~~Council of Bishops~~ Assembly of Bishops unless they have been assigned by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Committee on Episcopacy to serve in an interim capacity due to a vacancy within an episcopal area for at least three months (¶ 516.1, .3).

PARAGRAPH	519
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 519. LEAVES.

1. *Leave of Absence* — A bishop may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Committee on Episcopacy. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Committee on Episcopacy shall preside in the episcopal area.
2. *Medical Leave* — Bishops who by reason of impaired health are temporarily unable to perform full work may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Committee on Episcopacy. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Committee on Episcopacy shall preside in the episcopal area. If, after the six-month time period is over, the bishop is still unable to perform full work due to impaired health, the bishop should apply for disability benefits through the benefit program.

PARAGRAPH	520
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 520. COMPLAINTS AGAINST BISHOPS.

- Any complaint concerning the effectiveness, competence, or one or more of the offenses listed in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* shall be submitted to the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~Global Committee on Episcopacy. A complaint is a written statement claiming misconduct, unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties, or one or more of the listed offenses.
- The complaint shall be administered according to the provisions of Part Eight: Judicial Administration. Any involuntary status change of a bishop must be recommended by a three-fourths vote of the investigative committee and approved by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~Global Committee on Episcopacy by a two-thirds vote (*Judicial Practice and Procedure 3*).

PARAGRAPH 521

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the change in name from Council of Bishops to Assembly of Bishops.

¶ 521. COUNCIL OF BISHOPS ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS.

1. Bishops, although assigned to serve an episcopal area, are general superintendents of the whole Church. As all ordained ministers are first elected into membership of an annual conference and subsequently appointed to pastoral charges, so bishops become through their election members first of the ~~Council~~ Assembly of Bishops before they are subsequently assigned to areas of service. By virtue of their election and consecration, bishops are members of the ~~Council~~Assembly of Bishops and are bound in special covenant with all other bishops. In keeping with this covenant, bishops fulfill their servant leadership and express their mutual accountability. The ~~Council~~Assembly of Bishops is a faith community of mutual trust and concern responsible for the faith development and continuing well-being of its members. Bishops may meet digitally or in person as an ~~Council~~ Assembly of Bishops to provide mutual support and to share best practices, but the ~~Council~~ Assembly shall have no other responsibilities.
2. The ~~Council~~ Assembly of Bishops is thus the collegial expression of episcopal leadership in and to the Church and through the Church into the world. The Church expects the ~~Council~~ Assembly of Bishops to speak to the Church and from the Church to the world.
3. The ~~Council~~ Assembly of Bishops is composed of all active bishops and any senior elders who are assigned to serve as interim bishops for a minimum of three months. There shall be no funds allocated for any ~~Council~~ Assembly staff. Bishops emeriti who are not appointed to serve as interim bishops shall not attend meetings of the ~~Council~~ Assembly of Bishops or participate in its deliberations.

PARAGRAPH	522
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the end of the transitional state of the Church.

¶ 522. CHRISTIAN UNITY.

2. *Transitional Wesleyan Unity Commission.*

- a. The ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ General Conference shall appoint a Wesleyan Unity Commission that shall be chaired by a bishop of the Global Methodist Church and consist of eight additional persons.
- b. The Wesleyan Unity Commission shall bring recommendations to the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ General Conference with respect to full organic union with other Wesleyan denominations or associations of churches either before or at the convening General Conference. The ~~Wesleyan Unity Commission shall recommend to the Transitional Leadership Council~~ General Conference whether such denominations or associations shall have representation at the convening General Conference with voice, and with or without vote. Within discussions about greater union with other denominations or associations, particular care shall be taken to uphold the doctrine and moral principles and polity of the Global Methodist Church. The ~~Transitional Leadership Council shall have the option of approving a plan of union to be effective immediately or to recommend such a plan of union to be approved at the convening General Conference.~~
- c. The Wesleyan Unity Committee shall bring recommendations for covenant relationships with Affiliated Covenant Churches under ¶ 523.4 to be approved at the convening General Conference.

PARAGRAPH 604

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the end of the transitional state of the Church.

¶ 604. POWERS. The ~~convening~~ General Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters that are distinctly connectional, including, but not limited to:

1. Adopt a constitution for the Global Methodist Church and amendments to such constitution.
9. To define and establish a Connectional Council with delegated authority from the General Conference to address all matters entrusted to it between meetings of the General Conference subject to such limitations as the General Conference may from time to time impose and subject to ratification of its actions taken between General Conferences by the General Conference.
910. Determine a program for raising and distributing the funds that are necessary for the work of the Church, including, but not limited to, delegating to the Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church the establishment of the general church budget annually in accordance with any priorities and directions established by the General Conference.

Subsequent subparagraphs would be renumbered.

14. Adopt or revise a statement of Our Social Witness, provided that such adoption or revision shall require a three-quarters vote of the ~~convening~~ General Conference.
15. To effectively speak on behalf of the whole church, resolutions dealing with social concerns shall similarly require the support of three-quarters of the ~~convening~~ General Conference. All resolutions not part of Our Social Witness or church law shall remain in effect only until the next General Conference convenes when they may or may not be revised or reapproved.

PARAGRAPH	605
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the end of the transitional state of the Church.

¶ 605. OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1. The bishops shall be the presiding officers at the General Conference.
2. The ~~Each~~ General Conference shall elect a secretary upon nomination by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church to serve until the adjournment of the next General Conference. The secretary shall oversee the publication and translation of proposals made to the convening General Conference and the actions taken by it, including publishing a transcript of the daily proceedings. The secretary shall be responsible for the corrected copy of the permanent record of the convening General Conference. ~~The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint an interim secretary of the convening General Conference who will serve until his or her successor is elected.~~

PETITION 195

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶606

PARAGRAPH	606
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 606. ORGANIZATION.

3. *Virtual Sessions* — Where necessary due to international or local conditions that prevent the physical assembling of delegates, the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church may, with a two-thirds vote, authorize the conducting of the conference via electronic or other digital means.

PARAGRAPH 607

COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the end of the transitional state of the Church.

¶ 607. PETITIONS TO THE CONVENING GENERAL CONFERENCE. Any organization, clergy member, or lay member of the Global Methodist Church may petition the convening General Conference in the following manner:

1. The petition must be sent to the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ secretary of the General Conference or a designated petitions secretary. It shall be in typed or printed or electronic form, or other means approved by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ secretary of the General Conference, and shall follow a format determined by them.
4. Petitions must be received by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ secretary of General Conference or its designee no later than 120 days prior to the opening session of the ~~convening~~ General Conference.
5. Petitions properly submitted shall be printed in advance of the ~~convening~~ General Conference in all the principal languages of the church and made available to delegates at least 60 days prior to the opening session of the ~~convening~~ General Conference. Where the content of petitions is essentially the same, the petition will be printed once, with the first author named and the number of additional copies received printed. Upon publication, all translations of the advance publication shall be made available as a downloadable file, free of charge, on the denominational website. Petitions and/or resolutions received after the deadline may be printed and distributed to all the delegates upon the approval of each for distribution by the ~~convening~~ General Conference.
6. The secretary of the ~~convening~~ General Conference shall arrange for electronic access to all petitions, including ~~convening~~ General Conference actions and the resulting impact on the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, throughout the ~~convening~~ General Conference session. This access shall be available until the publication of the new edition of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Implementation shall be according to guidelines established by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church.

PETITION 198

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶608

PARAGRAPH	608
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the end of the transitional state of the Church.

¶ 608. LEGISLATION EFFECTIVE DATE. All legislation of the ~~convening~~ General Conference shall become effective January 1 following the session of the ~~convening~~ General Conference at which it is enacted, unless otherwise specified.

PARAGRAPH	C - 203 ARTICLE VII AND BDD ¶609
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	REV. KERRY R. WOOD - GOLDSTON, NC (USA)
ORGANIZATION	NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	The GMC is best served by eliminating regional conferences from our organizational structure, focusing on the local church-annual conference-general conference connection. Our polity offers ample creativity for connection among conferences for missional effectiveness without this level of bureaucracy.

Whereas the Global Methodist Church seeks to be a faithful representation of the Wesleyan understanding of faithfulness and holiness to God, and

Whereas the Global Methodist Church also seeks to benefit from the historical actions of the predecessor denominations from which it originates, and

Whereas the organization of the Global Methodist Church at its convening general conference will establish the precedents and expectations of self-governance for a fruitful future spreading scriptural holiness into all the earth, and

Whereas John Wesley established the core connection for those in the Methodist tradition as the cooperation among groups of people in classes, bands and societies that we now experience as small groups, Bible studies, covenant groups, congregations, annual and general conferences, and

Whereas annual conference accountability to the general conference, without intermediary levels in between them, has proven to be the most effective accountability and practical means for promoting the Church's mission within the Wesleyan tradition, and

Whereas annual conferences have no restrictions in how they may elect to work together in oversight or governance to institutions related to the church such as hospitals, schools, or other such entities as deemed appropriate and necessary, and

Whereas the consideration of regional conferences, jurisdictional conferences or other intermediary levels of conferencing within the Global Methodist Church has not been developed as a necessary or scripturally derived level of church organization, and

Whereas the concept of regional conferences in other denominations claiming a Wesleyan heritage have used this level of organization to potentially undermine biblical authority, accountability and unity across the global denomination; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Global Methodist Church shall delete **Article VII Regional Conferences** and all contents within this section from its draft constitution, renumbering all other articles within the constitution accordingly to final approval of articles within the constitution, and

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED that **Section II. The Regional Conferences, paragraph 609 Regional Conferences** and all contents within this section of the Provisional Book of Doctrines and Discipline shall be deleted.

PETITION 200

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶609

PARAGRAPH	609
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the end of the transitional state of the Church.

¶ **609. REGIONAL CONFERENCES.** The General Conference may establish regional conferences for the purposes of coordinating and conducting the mission of the Church around the world. The General Conference shall determine the powers, authority, and boundaries of the regional conference. The regional conferences shall be composed of clergy and lay delegates in equal number elected from the annual conferences within each regional conference. General Conference delegates shall also serve as delegates to the regional conference. Where necessary due to conditions that prevent the physical assembling of delegates, ~~the Transitional Leadership Council or the bishops of the regional college of bishops~~ may, with a two-thirds vote, authorize the conducting of the conference via electronic or other digital means.

PETITION 201

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶806

PARAGRAPH	806
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the creation of the office of the conference superintendent.

¶ 806. ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS CONCERNING CLERGY. An administrative complaint involves allegations of the unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties through incompetence, ineffectiveness, or unwillingness or inability to perform such duties. Allegations of professional or personal misconduct shall not be handled through an administrative complaint but through the provisions of ¶ 808.1-2. Administrative complaints may be filed by laypersons who are within the scope of a respondent's ministry, other clergy familiar with the respondent's ministry, the presiding elder, the conference superintendent, or the bishop. The complaint shall contain specific examples of unsatisfactory performance, including at least approximate dates and times (if appropriate).

PARAGRAPH	807
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopal Committee.

¶ 807. ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS CONCERNING BISHOPS. An administrative complaint involves allegations of the unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties through incompetence, ineffectiveness, or unwillingness or inability to perform such duties. Allegations of professional or personal misconduct shall not be handled through an administrative complaint but through the provisions of ¶ 808.1-2. Administrative complaints may be filed by laypersons, clergy, and presiding elders in the annual conference in which the bishop is serving, the conference committee on episcopacy, or another bishop. The complaint shall contain specific examples of unsatisfactory performance, including at least approximate dates and times (if appropriate). The supervisory process shall be administered by the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee or their designee. All expenses for the administrative process for complaints involving bishops shall be borne by the general church. The process for an administrative complaint against a bishop shall be governed by JPP 3.

PARAGRAPH 808

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopal Committee and the office of conference superintendent.

¶ **808. JUDICIAL COMPLAINTS.** A judicial complaint involves allegations of misconduct as enumerated in the chargeable offenses below. Such complaints may be filed by any layperson or clergy person, a presiding elder, a conference superintendent, or a bishop. The complaint shall contain specific allegations of misconduct, including at least approximate dates and times (if appropriate).

5. *If the respondent is a bishop*, the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee shall make the conference episcopacy committee where the bishop presides (if any) and all active bishops and conference superintendents aware of the complaint and keep them apprised of its progress.

PARAGRAPH 809

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopal Committee.

¶ 809. JUDICIAL SUPERVISORY RESPONSE.

1. The purpose of the judicial supervisory response is to, so far as possible, establish facts, consider circumstances and explanations, determine if there is an issue that merits action, and arrive at a resolution of the complaint that restores compliance and redresses any harms resulting from a violation. Processing of a judicial complaint shall be governed by JPP 4. If the respondent is a bishop, the supervisory process shall be administered by the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee or their designee (¶ 811.1). The supervisory response shall result in one of three possible outcomes, including the dismissal or resolution of the complaint or a referral to the committee on investigation (JPP 4.4).
2. *Suspension* — To avoid harm to the church or ministry setting or to the respondent, the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee with the affirmative vote of a majority of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee (if the respondent is a bishop) or the bishop with the affirmative vote of a majority of the cabinet (if the respondent is clergy) may suspend the respondent from all ministry responsibilities during the supervisory and investigative process for a judicial complaint. The respondent retains all rights and privileges, including continuation of housing, salary, and benefits, while suspended from ministerial duties, provided, however, that they shall not interfere with an interim bishop or pastor appointed to carry out their duties while they are suspended. If the judicial complaint does not proceed to trial, the respondent's suspension must be lifted at that time

PETITION 205

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶810

PARAGRAPH	810
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopal Committee.

¶ 810. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION.

1. *When Respondent is a Bishop* — ~~The Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee shall appoint a global committee on investigation as provided in JPP 5.

PARAGRAPH	811
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopal Committee and the role of conference superintendent.

¶ 811. REFERRAL OF A COMPLAINT TO A COUNSEL FOR THE CHURCH.

1. *When the Respondent is a Bishop*
 - a. The chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee or their designee shall handle the supervisory response as per the JPP 4.2. If a just resolution is not agreed to and the complaint is not dismissed, the chair or their designee shall notify all active bishops, conference superintendents, and the relevant conference episcopacy committee (if any) of the existence and nature of the complaint and appoint counsel under JPP 6.1.
 - b. If six or more members of the committee on investigation so recommend, the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee may suspend the respondent, with continuation of housing, salary, and benefits, from all episcopal duties and responsibilities pending the conclusion of the trial process

PETITION 207

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶814

PARAGRAPH	814
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the Global Episcopal Committee.

¶ 814. CONVENING OF A TRIAL COURT.

1. In the trial of a bishop, the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee shall proceed to convene the court under the provisions of the JPP 9 and 11.

PETITION 208

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶820

PARAGRAPH	820
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the end of the transitional period of the Church.

¶ 820. MEMBERSHIP.

2. ~~*Interim Council Appointment*~~—The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint by majority vote the persons to serve on an interim Connectional Council on Appeals. Clergy and laity shall be appointed to serve as alternates in a number equal to the number to serve on the interim Connectional Council on Appeals. Alternates shall serve in their category at any session of the Council in the absence of a member of the Council in the order of their election. Members of the interim Council may be nominated to be elected by the convening General Conference. Any time served on the interim Council shall not count against term limits set by the convening General Conference.

PARAGRAPH 822

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the end of the transitional period of the Church.

¶ 822. JURISDICTION.

10. ~~During the period after the legal formation of the Global Methodist Church until the convening General Conference, the interim Connectional Council on Appeals may grant certiorari to render a declaratory decision as to the meaning, application, or effect of the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or any portion thereof or the legality, meaning, application, or effect of any act of Transitional Leadership Council or of proposed legislation upon request by a majority vote of the Transitional Leadership Council.~~
11. ~~During the period after the legal formation of the Global Methodist Church until the convening General Conference, the interim Connectional Council on Appeals shall have jurisdiction upon any of the items 1-9 above as requested by the appropriate body in each item, except that the majority vote of the Transitional Leadership Council shall substitute for the request of the General Conference in each relevant item.~~

PETITION 210

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶902

PARAGRAPH	902
COMMITTEE	FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ **902. STEWARDSHIP OF ASSETS.** There is no trust clause for property held by local churches, annual conferences, regional conferences, connectional commissions, ~~the Transitional Leadership Council~~, or any of their other entities of the Global Methodist Church. Each local church, annual conference, regional conference, or connectional commission shall designate in its corporate records how its property shall be disposed of in the event of the entity's dissolution.

PETITION 211

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶904

PARAGRAPH	904
COMMITTEE	FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 904. **REGISTRATION OF THE NAME “GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH”.** The words “Global Methodist Church” are not to be used as, or as a part of, a trade name or trademark or as a part of the name of any business firm or organization, except by local churches, conferences, corporations, or other business units created for the administration of work undertaken directly by the Global Methodist Church. The ~~Transitional Leadership Council or its successor~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church is charged with supervision and registration of “Global Methodist Church” and the denomination’s logo.

PETITION 212

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶908

PARAGRAPH	908
COMMITTEE	FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 908. INSTITUTING AND DEFENDING CIVIL ACTION. Because of the nature of the Global Methodist Church, no individual or affiliated church body or unit, nor any official thereof, may commence or participate in any suit or proceeding in the name of, or on behalf of, the Global Methodist Church, excepting, however, the following:

1. ~~Transitional Leadership Council or Its Successor~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church — The ~~Transitional Leadership Council or its successor~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church or any persons or church unit served with legal process in the name of the Global Methodist Church may appear for the purpose of presenting to the court the nonjural nature of the Global Methodist Church and to raise issues of lack of jurisdiction of the court, lack of capacity of such individual or unit to be served with process, and related constitutional issues in defense of denominational interests.

PETITION 213

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶910

PARAGRAPH	910
COMMITTEE	FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The change is necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ **910. AUDITS AND BONDING OF CHURCH OFFICERS.** All persons holding trust funds, securities, or moneys of any kind belonging to a unit of the Global Methodist Church (not including a local church) shall be bonded by a reliable company in such good and sufficient sum as the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church or its designated agent may direct. The accounts of such units shall be audited at least annually by a recognized public or certified public accountant. A report to a unit of the Global Methodist Church containing a financial statement that this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* requires to be audited shall not be approved until the audit is made and the financial statement is shown to be correct. Other parts of the report may be approved pending such audit.

PARAGRAPH	705
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Transitional Connectional Commissions are proposed to be replaced by Connectional Commissions and this paragraph has been rewritten as part of that legislation.

- ~~¶ 705. POTENTIAL TRANSITIONAL CONNECTIONAL COMMISSIONS.~~** The Transitional Leadership Council may form transitional commissions dealing with any or all of these tasks or areas of ministry:
- ~~1. — *Evangelism, Missions, and Church Planting* — including, but not limited to, fostering cross-cultural and international partnerships between local churches, districts, and annual conferences; vetting, approving, and maintaining accountability for mission projects and their funding; providing for disaster relief and refugee ministry; identifying and providing resources for church planting in various cultural contexts; and consulting with bishops, annual conference leaders, and local churches to plan and strategize for planting churches.~~
 - ~~2. — *Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry* — including, but not limited to, encouraging growth in discipleship through small groups; proposing liturgies and orders of worship for use by both local congregations and the general church for General Conference approval; resourcing understanding of our doctrines; and resourcing local churches in engaging with the church's social witness and social issues from a variety of political perspectives and from a biblical foundation.~~
 - ~~3. — *Ministry* — including, but not limited to, implementing the standards and qualifications set for various forms of ministry; developing curricula for ministry training courses, including Course of Study; resourcing annual conference boards of ministry; ensuring adequate psychological and background evaluation for candidates; establishing and refining criteria and qualifications for various forms of non-parish ministry; evaluating and approving training programs that meet the criteria and qualifications; examining and credentialing persons for various forms of non-parish ministry; and supporting persons engaging in non-parish ministry.~~
 - ~~4. — *Communications* — including, but not limited to, resourcing local churches, annual conferences, and the general church in communication strategy and implementation; creating print and digital resources that communicate the work of the church; publishing the *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*; translating communications and resources into the languages of the church; and growing the digital communication capability of the church.~~

-
5. ~~*Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits*~~ — including, but not limited to, overseeing the financial and fiduciary life of the general church to insure both its integrity and efficiency; reporting publicly the detailed expenses and income; conducting an annual independent audit; collecting and distributing all income received by the general church; managing the legal work of the general church; giving oversight to the pension and benefits (i.e., health insurance, disability, etc.) programs for clergy and lay employees of the church worldwide; and encouraging conferences worldwide to provide adequate pension funding and medical care for those who serve in the church's ministry (active and retired).
6. ~~Transitional commissions may also be formed in other areas not named above and assigned responsibility to develop policies and programs related to those other areas.~~

PARAGRAPH 706

COMMITTEE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The role of Transitional Connectional Operating Officer is being eliminated and other legislation is proposed to outline the role of a Connectional Operating Officer.

¶ 706. THE TRANSITIONAL CONNECTIONAL OPERATING OFFICER. ~~The transitional connectional operating officer shall bear primary responsibility for the fruitful and accountable functioning of the general church and serve as its chief executive and administrative officer. The transitional connectional operating officer shall be directly amenable to the Transitional Leadership Council. The transitional connectional operating officer shall assign staff to support and resource any general commission and provide oversight to all general church staff.~~

- ~~1. **Selection** — The transitional connectional operating officer may be either a clergy or lay person and shall be selected by the Transitional Leadership Council by majority vote of the Council.~~
- ~~2. **Term** — The transitional connectional operating officer serves at the pleasure of the Transitional Leadership Council or until the convening General Conference adjourns and leadership for the season immediately after the convening General Conference is selected.~~
- ~~3. **Responsibilities and Duties** — The responsibilities of the transitional connectional operating officer shall include the following:~~
 - ~~a. — Serve as the general church's chief executive and administrative officer and oversee all connectional commissions and enterprises.~~
 - ~~b. — Oversee planning and research to advance and implement the mission and strategic plan of the church.~~
 - ~~c. — Serve as the staff person for the Transitional Leadership Council in assisting the Council in all its work, but especially to provide a unified sense of vision and mission for all the work of the denomination.~~
 - ~~d. — Along with the Transitional Leadership Council, coordinate the ministries of the general church to fulfill the mandates of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and to implement the actions of the General Conference.~~
 - ~~e. — Review and evaluate the missional effectiveness of the transitional general commissions of the church, making recommendations to the Council.~~

- f. ~~In consultation with the Transitional Commission on Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits, prepare the proposed connectional budget for the Transitional Leadership Council approval and, once approved, oversee its implementation, including, but not limited to, overseeing connectional finances and the maintenance of financial records.~~
- g. ~~Oversee yearly audits of connectional financial records.~~
- h. ~~Direct the development of policies and procedures to implement the provisions of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, including but not limited to personnel matters.~~
- i. ~~Direct and/or oversee connectional communications, public relations, and marketing.~~
- j. ~~Serve as the chief spokesperson for the denomination to the extent authorized by the Transitional Leadership Council.~~
- k. ~~With appropriate consultation, manage the process for and make the final decision on hiring, assigning, and retaining all general church staff, supervise and direct all general church staff, including performance reviews in consultation with the relevant commission(s), recommend compensation levels for all program staff for Transitional Leadership Council approval, and set compensation levels for all support staff. All processes shall comply with the policies and procedures adopted by the Transitional Leadership Council.~~
- l. ~~Negotiate and/or oversee negotiation of contracts for services including, but not limited to, facilities, connectional pension, insurance, and other benefit programs, with the approval of the relevant commission.~~
- m. ~~Recommend to General Conference through the Connectional Council changes to the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and implementing legislation.~~
- n. ~~Carry out other responsibilities and duties assigned by the General Conference or the Connectional Council.~~

PARAGRAPH 801

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The amendment removes language that is unnecessary after the effective date of legislation adopted by the convening General Conference.

¶ **801. ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE CHURCH.** Founded in the gospel call to faithfulness, and as set forth in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, ordination in the Global Methodist Church and membership in an annual conference is a sacred trust. As such, individual clergy, whether in active ministry, honorable or administrative location, or in senior status, are accountable to the whole church for their behavior and actions as long as they hold orders within the denomination. Similarly, numerous passages within the New Testament remind us of the sacred call given to all those in the church to watch over one another in love, stirring each to faithfulness and sanctification. Individuals accused of violating the canons of this covenant shall thus be subject to a review aimed at a just resolution of such complaints, in the hope that God's work of justice, reconciliation, and healing may be realized in the body of Christ. The provisions that follow shall govern this accountability process ~~during the time between the forming of the Global Methodist Church and the effective date of any legislation passed by the convening General Conference designed to replace them.~~

PETITION 217

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶802

PARAGRAPH	802
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 802. JUDICIAL PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES. ~~The Transitional Leadership Council shall approve the~~
The General Conference shall adopt *Judicial Practices and Procedures (JPP)* that shall govern the
complaint, supervisory, administrative, and judicial processes. Such JPP shall have the force of church law,
but not be included in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. In the event of a conflict between the *Book*
of Doctrines and Discipline and the JPP, the *Book Doctrines and Discipline* shall govern.

PARAGRAPH	803
COMMITTEE	JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 803. COMPLAINTS. The process of accountability is initiated when a formal complaint is filed. A complaint is a written and signed statement alleging misconduct as defined in ¶ 808.1-2 (a judicial complaint) or unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties (an administrative complaint, ¶¶ 806-807). If the complaint is against a bishop, the complaint shall be submitted to the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council-Global Episcopacy Committee~~. If the complaint is against a pastor, the complaint shall be submitted to that pastor’s presiding elder and bishop (or to a president *pro tempore* in the absence of an assigned bishop). If the complaint is against a local church member, the complaint shall be submitted to the presiding elder over that local church. The person authorized to receive the complaint or their designee shall handle the complaint throughout its process. Upon receiving a complaint, the duly authorized recipient shall describe the complaint process in writing both to the person making the complaint (“complainant”) and the person against whom the complaint is made (“respondent”). As the complaint process progresses, the duly authorized recipient of the complaint shall continue to describe in writing to the complainant and recipient new parts of the process in a timely fashion. All original time limitations may be extended only once for 30 days upon the consent of the complainant and the respondent

PARAGRAPH 805

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the creation of the office of the conference superintendent.

¶ 805. PRINCIPLES OF FAIR PROCESS.

9. *Immunity From Prosecution* — To preserve the integrity of the church's process and ensure full participation at all times, the chair of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee, the bishop, conference superintendent, cabinet, Board of Ministry, witnesses, support persons, counsel, administrative review committee, clergy voting in executive session, and all others who participate in the church's process shall have immunity from prosecution of complaints brought against them related to their role in a particular process, unless they have committed a chargeable offense in conscious and knowing bad faith. The complainant/plaintiff in any proceeding against any such person related to their role in a particular judicial process shall have the burden of proving, by clear and convincing evidence, that such person's actions constituted a chargeable offense committed knowingly in bad faith. The immunity set forth in this provision shall extend to civil court proceedings, to the fullest extent permissible by the civil laws.
10. *Counsel for the Church* — No person who was a member of the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Global Episcopacy Committee, cabinet, conference staff, Board of Ministry, or committee on investigation on or after the date of the alleged offense shall be appointed counsel for the Church or serve as counsel for the respondent or any of the persons bringing complaints in a case. By agreeing to serve, the counsel for the Church signifies his or her willingness to uphold the requirements of Church law and the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Counsel for the Church shall represent the interests of the Church in pressing the claims of the person making the complaint.

PARAGRAPH	610
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 610. ORGANIZATION.

1. *Composition* — Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability across a geographical region. A special annual conference or district that is not geographically bound and overlaps the boundaries of other annual conferences or districts can be formed by the decision of ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ the General Conference at the request of a group of churches. The voting membership of an annual conference shall be composed of those elders, deacons, and transitional local pastors under appointment (except as limited by ¶ 419.2b) and senior clergy who meet the qualifications of ¶ 418, as well as at least an equal number of lay members elected by each charge or by the district or annual conference. Each charge shall be entitled to as many lay members as it has appointed clergy. The annual conference may add lay members of the annual conference who are serving in conference leadership positions. The annual conference shall determine the method of electing additional lay members to equalize the number of clergy members. Only laity shall vote in the election of equaling laity. Such members may be elected by a charge conference, district conference, or the annual conference, but they must be elected and not appointed.

PARAGRAPH	702
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The Transitional Leadership Council will be replaced by other connectional organizations.

Section I. Transitional Leadership Council

~~¶ 702. PURPOSE AND COMPOSITION.~~

- ~~1. During the period of transition between the legal formation of the Global Methodist Church and the effective date of actions taken by the convening General Conference, the Transitional Leadership Council shall serve as the primary leadership body of the church. As the most representative body other than the General Conference, it is charged with making all necessary decisions related to the forming of the Global Methodist Church. Its decisions are subject to approval, modification, or revocation by the convening General Conference and shall be in effect only until the effective date of permanent policies and procedures adopted by the convening General Conference that would replace them. Following the convening General Conference, the work of the Transitional Leadership Council shall be transitioned into the connectional entities established and formed by that body.~~
- ~~2. The Transitional Leadership Council was formed out of a meeting held in Atlanta, Georgia, on March 2-4, 2020. Its 17 members consisted of three retired bishops (one from Africa) and 14 clergy and laity representing some traditional renewal groups, as well as non-aligned traditionalists. Non-episcopal members included one person each from Africa, Europe/Eurasia, and the Philippines. Its members also represent racial diversity, with African-American, Hispanic-Latino, and Asian-American members. This group is empowered to act as the governing body for the establishment of the Global Methodist Church.~~
- ~~3. Any bishop (active or senior) who transfers to the church under the provisions of ¶ 516 shall be added to the membership of the Transitional Leadership Council. Bishops who serve on the Transitional Leadership Council are expected to take an active role in helping to govern the church, including oversight responsibilities in annual conferences, as needed during the transition. For each bishop added to the Transitional Leadership Council, the Transitional Leadership Council shall also elect by majority vote two additional clergy or lay members, broadening the diversity and representation of the body.~~
- ~~4. The members of the Transitional Leadership Council shall serve until that body is disbanded under the provisions of the convening General Conference.~~

PARAGRAPH	703
COMMITTEE	CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	The Transitional Leadership Council will be replaced by other connectional organizations.

~~¶ 703. RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY.~~

- ~~1.— The Transitional Leadership Council is empowered to make all necessary decisions related to the forming and initial operating of the Global Methodist Church until the effective date of legislation adopted by the convening General Conference. The Transitional Leadership Council may form transitional bodies and assign to those bodies authority and responsibility for aspects of the church's work and the transitional process. Such transitional bodies remain amenable to the Transitional Leadership Council and their decisions are reviewable by the Transitional Leadership Council.~~
- ~~2.— *Specific Responsibilities* — The responsibilities of the Transitional Leadership Council include, but are not limited to:~~
 - ~~a.— Promote knowledge of and allegiance to Wesleyan doctrine and moral teaching as reflected in the doctrinal and social witness statements in Parts One and Two of this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.~~
 - ~~b.— Act as the legal incorporating body and establish the transitional polity of the Global Methodist Church.—~~
 - ~~c.— Oversee the receiving of local congregations into the Global Methodist Church under the provisions of ¶ 355.1-2.~~
 - ~~d.— Form groups of such local churches into districts and annual conferences under the provisions of ¶ 355.3.~~
 - ~~e.— Approve the reception of bishops (active and retired) into the Global Methodist Church (¶ 516).~~
 - ~~f.— Form episcopal areas and determine their boundaries. Determine the number of interim bishops and assign them to episcopal areas (¶ 515).~~
 - ~~g.— Oversee the receiving of clergy transferring into the Global Methodist Church under the provisions of ¶ 419. Serve as the appellate body for contested decisions.~~
 - ~~h.— Assign regional or annual conference bodies the responsibility for evaluating the status of licensed local pastors and candidates for ordained ministry to determine their status in the Global Methodist Church (¶ 419). Serve as the appellate body for contested decisions.~~

- j. — Appoint a provisional ecclesiastical endorsing board to provide denominational endorsement to persons in specialized ministries that require such (e.g., military or hospital chaplaincy) (¶ 413).
- j. — Establish a connectional fund for ministerial education and oversee its collection and distribution (¶ 411).
- k. — Oversee the appointment process of clergy through its bishops (¶¶ 355.4, 509 ff).
- l. — Facilitate a process for the transfer of clergy from one annual conference to another, as well as for moving clergy to parts of the nation or world where they are most needed (¶ 504.10).
- m. — Determine the compensation of bishops (¶ 505).
- n. — Establish the time and place of meeting for the convening General Conference. Appoint the necessary committees to organize the logistics of the event (¶ 604).
- o. — Determine the number of delegates for the convening General Conference and the formula for their allocation to the various annual conferences (¶ 604).
- p. — Appoint an interim secretary of the convening General Conference to administer the petition process and other non-logistical matters related to the convening conference. Nominate a convening General Conference secretary for approval by the convening conference (¶¶ 605, 607).
- q. — Establish guidelines for the publication and the online availability of both proposals and petitions to the convening General Conference and completed actions of the conference (¶ 607).
- r. — Form such interim commissions and other general church entities as it judges necessary to begin implementing the polity and mission of the Global Methodist Church.
- s. — Hire necessary staff to accomplish the work of the general church, including the work of any interim commissions or other transitional general church entities.
- t. — Establish connectional funding for the general church during the transition, create a system for receiving and disbursing funds given, and ensure fiscal accountability and integrity in all handling of church funds.
- u. — Implement the accountability processes required in *Part Eight* and the *Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules (JPP)*. Approve any involuntary status change of a bishop by a two-thirds vote (¶ 520.3).

PARAGRAPH 704
COMMITTEE CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION
SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE The Transitional Leadership Council will be replaced by other connectional organizations.

Section II. Transitional Connectional Commissions

~~¶ 704. PURPOSE AND COMPOSITION.~~

- ~~1. — *Purpose* — During the period of transition between the adoption of this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* by the Transitional Leadership Council and the effective date of actions taken by the convening General Conference, the Transitional Leadership Council may appoint transitional connectional commissions to begin the work of organizing and administering the connectional ministries of the denomination. The Transitional Leadership Council shall define the scope of work for any commission so formed and shall have the right of final approval of any policies or actions recommended by a commission. These decisions are subject to approval, modification, or revocation by the convening General Conference and shall be in effect only until the convening General Conference establishes permanent policies and procedures that would replace them. Following the convening General Conference, the work of the transitional connectional commissions shall be transitioned into the connectional commissions established and formed by that body.~~
- ~~2. — *Membership* — The Transitional Leadership Council shall determine the number of members for any transitional commission it establishes. The Transitional Leadership Council shall elect members for each commission by majority vote, based on the expertise and gifts they bring to the tasks of a commission. Care shall be taken to include persons from a broad range of racial, ethnic, tribal, gender, economic, and age characteristics. All potential geographical regions of the denomination should be represented. No person may serve simultaneously on more than one transitional commission. Commission members, including the officers, shall serve without remuneration. Travel and meeting expenses shall be paid for commission members by the Transitional Leadership Council out of general church funds.~~
- ~~3. — *Leadership* — The Transitional Leadership Council shall name the chair of each transitional commission. The commission shall elect a secretary and may elect other officers to facilitate its work. No bishop may serve as the chair of a commission while serving in the episcopal office. Each transitional commission may have one bishop, selected by the Transitional Leadership Council,~~

~~serving with voice and vote to help maintain communication and coordination with the bishops and to provide spiritual leadership to the commission.~~

4. ~~Staff~~ — The Transitional Leadership Council may approve the hiring of staff persons to resource the work of the transitional commissions, paid for out of general church funds. The chair of the Transitional Leadership Council shall make all hiring decisions and recommend compensation levels to the Transitional Leadership Council for approval.

PARAGRAPH 611

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the end of the transitional state of the Church.

¶ 611. POWERS AND DUTIES.

6. Elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference according to the formula determined by the General Conference. Clergy delegates shall be members in full connection in good standing of the Global Methodist Church who have served a minimum of two years preceding their election in the Global Methodist Church or its predecessors. ~~During the period prior to the convening General Conference, u~~Under the provisions of ¶ 419.2a, transitional local pastors who have been approved for ordination as elders or deacons shall be members in full connection and may be clergy delegates provided that they are in good standing and have served a minimum of two years preceding their election in the Global Methodist Church or its predecessors. Lay delegates shall have been professing members of the Global Methodist Church, or its predecessors, for at least two years. Both clergy and lay delegates shall be elected by a minimum of fifty percent of votes cast plus one, with clergy voting for clergy delegates and laity voting for lay delegates.

PETITION 225

EDITORIAL AMENDMENT TO ¶612

PARAGRAPH 612

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 612. ANNUAL CONFERENCE BOARDS AND COMMITTEES. Annual Conferences shall create the following boards and committees:

2. *Episcopacy Committee* —

- f. Keeping in mind the roles, responsibilities, and duties laid in ¶¶502-504, the Committee shall engage in an annual evaluation of the Bishop in consultation with the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~annual conference connectional table or equivalent.

3. *Finance and Administration Committee* —

- d. The committee shall coordinate its work with the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church or its designee of the Global Methodist Church.

PARAGRAPH 613

COMMITTEE CONFERENCES

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE The changes are necessary because of the elimination of the Transitional Leadership Council and the end of the transitional state of the Church.

¶ 613. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS ANNUAL CONFERENCE CONNECTIONAL FUNDING AND REPORTING OF INFORMATION FOR ALLOCATION OF DELEGATES TO GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1. The annual conference should establish a funding percentage for its local churches to support the work of the conference, including providing for the costs of the bishop (¶¶ 611.2, 505). Efforts should be made to minimize conference funding in order to allow maximum resources to remain in local churches. Support for ministries within and beyond the annual conference should not be included in such funding percentage but be raised as mission giving from individuals and local churches. The conference should take into consideration any guidelines offered by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church on the setting of the funding percentage. The general church funding percentage shall be set by the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ General Conference without adjustment by the annual conference.
2. In order to allocate delegates to the ~~convening~~ General Conference, the ~~Transitional Leadership Council~~ Connectional Council of the Global Methodist Church shall establish a deadline by which time the annual conference must submit a list of churches ~~aligning with the Global Methodist Church in the annual conference~~ and the number of full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments in the annual conference. Delegates for the convening General Conference shall be allocated based on the number of churches and full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments an annual conference ~~or other divisions of the church not part of an annual conference~~ has as compared to the total number of churches and full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments of the Global Methodist Church as of the deadline. ~~(Alignment decisions may be made by local churches after that deadline, according to any provisions adopted by the General~~

~~Conference of The United Methodist Church, but such decisions would not be taken into account for allocating delegates to the convening General Conference.) The Transitional Leadership Council may allocate delegates to annual conferences or other divisions of the church not part of an annual conference that are formed or in formation after the deadline established by the Transitional Leadership Council.~~

- ~~3. As local churches are formed into new annual conferences by the Transitional Leadership Council, the new annual conferences shall begin organizing themselves according to the provisions of ¶¶ 611-612, under the guidance and supervision of the Transitional Leadership Council and any transitional bodies at the general church level created by the Transitional Leadership Council.~~

PARAGRAPH 409 & OTHERS

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER REV. KEITH KATTERHEINRICH - ASHLAND, KY (USA)

ORGANIZATION MIDSOUTH CONFERENCE

RATIONALE To better order the ministry of every congregation, these proposed amendments to paragraph 409, with changes to relevant subsequent paragraphs, seek to distinguish the order of deacons as distinct from the order of elders. As the apostolic leadership of the early Church in Acts 6 did not work alone but were led to select seven to aid and accompany their ministry, I propose that the order of deacon is a necessary, distinct yet accompanying order to the elders in the work and life of the Church.

¶ 403. ORDERS OF MINISTRY.

1. *Order of Deacons* — Within the people of God, some persons are called to the ministry of deacon, which is a separate order aiding and accompanying elders in the work of the Church, devoted to a ministry of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice. The words deacon, deaconess, and diaconate all spring from a common Greek root—*diakonos*, or “servant,” and *diakonia*, or “service.” This ministry exemplifies and leads the Church in the servanthood every Christian is called to live both in the church and in the world. Deacons are to witness to the Word in their words and actions, and to embody and lead the community’s service in the world for the sake of enacting God’s compassion and justice. Within and beyond a local church, deacons may, among other ministries, lead in worship, preach and teach, conduct marriages, bury the dead, care for the sick and needy, and interpret the needs of the world to the church. Deacons may also consecrate or assist with the Sacraments in accordance with ¶ 313. Deacons may serve in a variety of offices within and beyond a local church, including, but not limited to, serving as pastor of a local church. Deacons retain their responsibility to witness and service in the world. ~~Ordination as a deacon is for life, whether a person is subsequently ordained an elder or not; persons may remain as deacons should they desire to do so.~~
2. *Order of Elders* — ~~From among those ordained as deacons, Along with deacons, others within the~~ people of God are called to carry on the historic work of the *presbyteros* or elder in the life of the Church to the ministry of Word, Sacrament, and Order. ~~(Those who were not ordained deacon prior to ordination as elder will be granted deacon’s orders upon beginning their service in the Global Methodist Church. It is recommended that annual conferences recognize this grant through a special~~

service.) Those called to the ministry of elder bear authority and responsibility to proclaim God's Word fearlessly, to teach God's people faithfully, to administer the sacraments, and to order the life of the church so that it may be both faithful and fruitful. Elders retain their calling as Laity to witness and service in the world, ~~as well as their call as~~ and like deacons have the call to word, service, compassion, and justice among the people of God.

¶ 406. ENTRANCE INTO ORDAINED MINISTRY.

4. A certified candidate must undergo a period of spiritual formation under the supervision of the annual conference board of ministry until such time as the person is ordained ~~a deacon~~.

¶ 407. EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ORDINATION.

4. *Elders Educational Requirements* — For ~~deacons~~ those who wish to pursue elder's orders, a minimum of ~~ten additional~~ twenty courses (~~beyond the ten already taken required for ordination as deacon~~) will be required, with at least one course from each of the following areas.
 - Introduction to the Old Testament
 - Introduction to the New Testament
 - Christian Leadership/Conflict Resolution
 - Methodist Theology
 - Denominational History and Polity
 - Basics of Preaching
 - Pastoral Care
 - Worship and Sacraments
 - Apologetics
 - Evangelism and Missions

- The Gospel Vision for Justice
- Christian Education & Discipleship
- Ministering to Children
- Models of Youth Ministry
- Church Finance and Administration
- Ministry in Intercultural Contexts
- Additional courses in Bible or theology

¶ 409. ORDINATION AS DEACON. Within the Global Methodist Church, certified candidates, ~~must first be ordained as deacons and, after ordination as deacons, may be ordained as elders after completing the candidacy discernment process, may be ordained as deacons.~~

1. *Ordination Questions —*

¶ 410. ORDINATION AS ELDER.

1. ~~Deacons~~ Those who desire to be ordained as an elder shall declare their candidacy for such ordination to the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. They shall be eligible for ordination as elder once they:
 - a. Prove themselves faithful, mature, and effective over a period of a minimum of two years' service as a deacon an approved candidate;

PETITION 229

ENDING BLOCK VOTING

PARAGRAPH 409.2

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER REV. ROBERT BARNES - SAN ANTONIO, TX (USA)

ORGANIZATION MIDTEXAS CONFERENCE

RATIONALE Both boards of ministry and clergy sessions have essential responsibilities in reviewing and approving candidates for the ordained ministry. In recent years, many conferences in our predecessor denomination and in the GMC have adopted the practice of voting on candidates for ordination in a block rather than individually. For the sake of meaningful accountability and the integrity of the clergy session, we should end this practice now.

AMEND Par. 409.2 as follows

The annual conference board of ministry or equivalent will interview the candidate for readiness for ordination as a deacon. After being interviewed and recommended, individually, by the annual conference board of ministry by a two-thirds vote and approved individually, by a two-thirds vote of the clergy of the annual conference in executive session and by the bishop, a certified candidate shall become a full member of the annual conference and be ordained as deacon by the bishop through the laying on of hands.

Rationale: Both boards of ministry and clergy sessions have essential responsibilities in reviewing and approving candidates for the ordained ministry. In recent years, many conferences in our predecessor denomination adopted a practice in which the role of the clergy session was intentionally diminished, by requiring them to vote on candidates for ministry as a “block”, instead of individually. This change did save time, but it also allowed boards of ministry to pass through candidates for ministry who were ineligible for ordination according to the Book of Discipline.

We do not want to allow ourselves to be haunted by memories of the past, but we also don’t want to carry forward practices that are overly vulnerable to exploitation. Although it is unlikely that we would misuse “block voting” for the same reasons our predecessor denomination did, for the sake of meaningful accountability and the integrity of the clergy session, we should end it now.

PETITION 231

PETITION TO REMOVE LANGUAGE RESTRICTING APPROVED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS GEOGRAPHICALLY

PARAGRAPH	407.1
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	REV. MATTHEW ABEL - CANTON, GA (USA)
ORGANIZATION	NORTH GEORGIA CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	The stricken portion of ¶ 407.1 unnecessarily prevents the GMC and Boards of Ministry from considering courses from any undergraduate program past, present, or future. mechanisms to vet institutions and courses already exist at both the general church and annual conference level. Further, approved seminaries such as Asbury and United offer advanced standing credit for approved undergraduate coursework and are therefore already effectively circumventing this restriction.

¶ 407.1

In order better to prepare leaders, the Global Methodist Church requires candidates for ordination as deacons and elders to fulfill basic educational requirements as part of the ordination process. These educational requirements include the courses defined in ¶ 407.3.a, and .b below: Ten courses (thirty credit hours) for those pursuing deacons orders, and ten additional courses (thirty credit hours) for those seeking elders orders. Recognizing that educational opportunities vary based on geography and life circumstance, the Global Methodist Church will accept courses, singly or in combination, from any of the following degree programs, so long as the required courses are successfully completed for the level of ordination being pursued: an approved alternative educational pathway, a bachelor's degree program in ministry (~~for persons residing other than in the United States and Western Europe~~), a joint Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Divinity program, a program for a Master of Arts or equivalent degree in the practice of ministry, or a Master of Divinity degree program.

PARAGRAPH 407.2

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER DR. JESSICA LAGRONE - WILMORE, KY (USA)

ORGANIZATION TRINITY CONFERENCE

RATIONALE Institutions of higher education shape the faith and practice of students. Global Methodist clergy should be formed in the Great Tradition of Christian faith & Wesleyan theology & practice. Without have an approved list, students may choose to attend programs that emphasize progressive, Reformed, or other theological outlooks inconsistent with our Doctrinal Standards. It is imperative that our clergy receive orthodox & Wesleyan theological education for the preservation of Methodist tradition.

Approved Theological Schools

Substitution of new paragraph ¶407.2, necessitating additional language under ¶705.3

¶ 407.2

~~2. — *Recommended Educational Institutions* — A recommended list of schools for ministry education will be maintained by the Transitional Commission on Ministry. Candidates for ordination are strongly encouraged to choose from the list of recommended institutions to complete educational requirements for ordination; however, candidates may complete their educational requirements at any accredited educational institution, including institutions not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list. The Transitional Commission on Ministry must approve courses to fulfill the educational requirement for Methodist Theology and Denominational History and Polity. The Transitional Commission on Ministry will recommend competencies and courses for ministerial training, as well as establish standards for and supervise approved Courses of Study in conjunction with the annual conference boards of ministry.~~

Replace with:

2. *Approved Educational Institutions* — A list of approved schools for ministry education will be maintained by the Commission on Ministry. Beginning July 1, 2025, candidates for ordination are required to choose from the list of approved institutions to complete educational requirements for ordination. Students who begin matriculation prior to July 1, 2025, are not required to complete their studies at an approved school.

This necessitates additional language under ¶705.3 to describe the Committee on Approval created by the new ¶407.2

Add Under ¶ 705.3

The Commission on Ministry shall appoint a Committee on Approval, which will recommend to the Commission on Ministry approval of institutions of higher education for ordination candidates in the Global Methodist Church. Approval shall apply to both degree and non-degree/certificate programs and be renewed following every regular session of the general conference. No approved school shall go up to seven years without a review. The Commission on Ministry shall make the final decision on approval based upon the Committee's recommendations.

Schools may be invited to apply for approval or recommended for approval by a Board of Ministry.

The Committee on Approval shall consist of one bishop and up to twenty other people, consisting of elders, deacons, and laity. The Committee will include people from diverse international contexts. To prevent conflict of interest, no one employed by or serving on the board of trustees of an institution of higher education shall serve on the Committee on Approval.

The work of the Committee on Approval shall involve (a) developing and refining an evaluation process, (b) ensuring approval by the Association of Theological Schools in North America or an approved equivalent accrediting body elsewhere whenever applicable, (c) ensuring that schools produce candidates for the GMC who are capable of effective ministry and profess faith consistent with our Doctrinal Standards, (d) addressing any areas of concern with schools following an evaluation, (e) developing a report to the Commission on Ministry with a recommendation of approval, approval with areas of concern, or delisting.

The Committee on Approval may meet as necessary upon the request of the bishop serving on the Committee. It will consider any requests or recommendations for schools who wish to be approved for education of ordination candidates in the GMC. It may meet to address areas of concern that arise regarding any approved school. It may make recommendations to the Commission on Ministry at any time.

The CEO (president or dean) of each approved institution for theological education shall serve on an Advisory Committee to the Committee on Approval. The CEO may appoint a proxy to serve in his or her stead. The Advisory Committee shall meet biannually to discuss challenges, opportunities, and concerns with one another and with the members of the Committee on Approval.

PARAGRAPH 506

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE A petition for a new paragraph 506 has been submitted which addresses another topic. The subject matter addressed by the current paragraph 506 is now addressed in proposed new paragraph 504.

¶ 506. SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT.

1. — ~~Presiding elders (district superintendents) are elders in full connection appointed by the bishop to the cabinet as an extension of the superintending role of the bishop within the annual conference. They serve at the bishop's pleasure and for a specific term of years to be determined by the convening conference. In instances where a new provisional annual conference is formed, the bishop shall consult with clergy and lay leaders of the provisional conference for the purpose of selecting presiding elders (district superintendents).~~
2. — ~~In the selection of presiding elders (district superintendents), bishops shall give due consideration to the inclusiveness of the Global Methodist Church (¶ 306).~~

PARAGRAPH 507
COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

RATIONALE A new paragraph 507 is proposed for adoption establishing the role of conference superintendent. The paragraph of the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline proposed for deletion addresses the responsibilities of the presiding elder. Those responsibilities would now be addressed by new paragraph 509.

~~¶ 507. RESPONSIBILITIES.~~

- ~~1. As an extension of the office of bishop, the presiding elder (district superintendent) shall oversee the total ministry of the clergy and churches in the communities of the district in their missions of witness and service in the world. The presiding elder (district superintendent) is the acting administrator of any pastoral charge in which a pastoral vacancy may develop, or where no pastor is appointed. As such, the presiding elder (district superintendent) has the following specific responsibilities:~~
- ~~2. Be the chief missional strategist of the district and be committed to living out the values of the Church, including a mandate of inclusiveness; model, teach, and promote generous Christian giving; cooperate in developing Christian unity, and ecumenical, multicultural, multiracial, and cooperative ministries; and work with persons across the Church to develop programs of ministry and mission that extend the witness of Christ into the world.~~
- ~~3. Along with the bishop, guard, transmit, teach, and proclaim, corporately and individually, the apostolic faith as it is expressed in Scripture and tradition from a Wesleyan perspective, communicating and defending the doctrines and discipline of the church as provided for in this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.~~
- ~~4. Work with the bishop and cabinet in the process of appointment and assignment for ordained clergy, or assignment of qualified and trained lay ministers.~~
- ~~5. Work to develop an effective and functioning system for recruitment of candidates for ordained ministry.~~
- ~~6. Establish working relationships with pastor-parish relations committees, clergy, district lay leaders, and other lay leadership, to develop faithful and effective systems of ministry within the district.~~

-
7. ~~Serve as an example of spiritual leadership by living a balanced and faithful life, and by encouraging both laity and clergy to continue to grow in spiritual formation.~~
 8. ~~Offer support, care, and counsel to clergy concerning matters affecting their effective ministry.~~
 9. ~~Encourage the building of covenant groups and communities among both the clergy and clergy families, and the laity on the district.~~
 10. ~~Maintain regular contact with the clergy on the district for counsel and supervision, and receive written or electronic reports of each clergy person's continuing education, spiritual practices, current ministry work, and goals for future ministry.~~
 11. ~~Maintain the appropriate records of all clergy appointed to or related to the charges on the district (including clergy in extension ministry and ministry beyond the local church), as well as records dealing with property, endowments, and other tangible assets of the Global Methodist Church within the district.~~
 12. ~~In consultation with the bishop and cabinet, work to develop the best strategic deployment of clergy possible in the district, including realignment of pastoral charges when needed, and the exploration of larger parishes, cooperative parishes, multiple staff configurations, new faith communities, and ecumenical shared ministries.~~
 13. ~~Interpret and decide all questions of Church law and discipline raised by the churches in the district, subject to review by the resident bishop of the annual conference.~~
 14. ~~Serve at the pleasure of the bishop and assume other leadership responsibilities as the bishop determines for the health and effectiveness of the local churches in the district and annual conference.~~

PARAGRAPH 407.1 & 407.2

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER REV. DANIEL FULTON - SOUTH CHARLESTON, WV (USA)

ORGANIZATION MIDSOUTH CONFERENCE

RATIONALE We need one standard which can be used globally for meeting educational requirements. Added approval requirement will help ensure that those who choose an undergraduate route do so in robust programs with good track records. There are a number of strong Wesleyan institutions providing robust undergraduate education in areas of ministry, and we would do well to increase our ability to partner with those institutions.

¶ 407. EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ORDINATION.

1. In order better to prepare leaders, the Global Methodist Church requires candidates for ordination as deacons and elders to fulfill basic educational requirements as part of the ordination process. These educational requirements include the courses defined in ¶ 407.3.a, and .b below: Ten courses (thirty credit hours) for those pursuing deacons orders, and ten additional courses (thirty credit hours) for those seeking elders orders. Recognizing that educational opportunities vary based on geography and life circumstance, the Global Methodist Church will accept courses, singly or in combination, from any of the following degree programs, so long as the required courses are successfully completed for the level of ordination being pursued: an approved alternative educational pathway, a bachelor's degree program in ministry ~~(for persons residing other than in the United States and Western Europe)~~ approved by the Conference Board of Ministry or at an institution recommended by the General Commission on Ministry, a joint Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Divinity program, a program for a Master of Arts or equivalent degree in the practice of ministry, or a Master of Divinity degree program.
2. *Recommended Educational Institutions* — A recommended list of schools for ministry education will be maintained by the Transitional Commission on Ministry. Candidates for ordination are strongly encouraged to choose from the list of recommended institutions to complete educational requirements for ordination; however, candidates may complete their educational requirements at any accredited educational institution, including institutions not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, provided, that work completed in a bachelor's degree program in ministry must be approved by the Conference Board of Ministry or at an institution recommended by the General

Commission on Ministry. The Transitional Commission on Ministry must approve courses to fulfill the educational requirement for Methodist Theology and Denominational History and Polity. The Transitional Commission on Ministry will recommend competencies and courses for ministerial training, as well as establish standards for and supervise approved alternative educational pathways in conjunction with the annual conference boards of ministry

Rationale:

The TBODD currently allows Bachelor degree work to be counted toward the educational requirements for those serving outside of the US or Western Europe, it would be better for the church to have one standard for the entire denomination.

Additionally, the petition adds a requirement for such a program to be approved by either the Conference Board of Ministry, or for the credited work to be completed at an institution recommended by the General Commission on Ministry, this will help ensure that those who choose an undergraduate route do so in robust programs with good track records. There are a number of strong Wesleyan institutions providing robust undergraduate education in areas of ministry, and we would do well to increase our ability to partner with those institutions.

PARAGRAPH 409.2

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER REV. JEFFREY RICKMAN - NOWATA, OK (USA)

ORGANIZATION HEARTLAND CONFERENCE

RATIONALE Quality control of leadership must be exercised. The Order of Deacons is a conciliar body and should exercise authority over the quality of its own membership. The timelines and documentation on each candidate will give elders and deacons time to learn about potential colleagues in ministry. It leaves final authority of the Order of Deacons with the annual conference elders/deacons and removes potential veto power of the bishop.

¶ 409. ORDINATION AS DEACON. Within the Global Methodist Church, certified candidates must first be ordained as deacons and, after ordination as deacons, may be ordained as elders.

1. *Ordination Questions* — Upon completion of the educational requirements of ¶ 406.2b and ¶407.3a, and passing a deacon's level knowledge examination in doctrine, history, discipline, and Bible, a candidate for ordination as deacon shall be interviewed by the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. During such interview, the candidate shall be asked the following questions:
 - (a) *What is your personal experience of God?*
 - (b) *What is your understanding of evil?*
 - (c) *What is your understanding of grace?*
 - (d) *How do you understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers and in the Church?*
 - (e) *What is your understanding of the Kingdom of God?*
 - (f) *What significance do you believe that the resurrection holds?*
 - (g) *What is your understanding of the nature and authority of Scripture?*
 - (h) *What is your understanding of the nature and mission of the Church?*
 - (i) *What gifts and graces do you bring to the work of ministry?*

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- (j) *What is the meaning of ordination?*
- (k) *What is the role and significance of the sacraments?*
- (l) *Have you studied our form of church discipline and polity and will you support and maintain it?*
- (m) *For the sake of the church's witness, are you willing to dedicate yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life, exercising self-control in your personal habits, integrity in all of your relationships and if married, fidelity in your covenant with your spouse, or if single, chastity in your personal conduct?*

In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church.

The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church.

2. ~~The annual conference board of ministry or equivalent will interview the candidate for readiness for ordination as a deacon. After being interviewed and recommended by the annual conference board of ministry by a two-thirds vote and approved by a two-thirds vote of the clergy of the annual conference in executive session and by the bishop, a~~

The following steps must be completed for each candidate:

- a. The annual conference board of ministry or equivalent will:
- i. Interview the candidate for readiness for ordination as a deacon
 - ii. Approve the candidate by a two-thirds vote, with voting restricted to one candidate at a time

iii. Publish the slate of approved candidates at least two weeks prior to the convening of the annual conference where the candidates will be considered for ordination. The slate should include the answers to the *Ordination Questions* for each candidate, along with each candidate's resumé, and a short bio on each one.

b. During the annual conference where the candidate will be considered for ordination, the clergy of the annual conference, in executive session, will:

i. Have an opportunity to question each candidate

ii. Approve the candidate by a two-thirds vote, with voting restricted to one candidate at a time

The certified candidate shall become a full member of the annual conference and be ordained as deacon by the bishop through the laying on of hands.

3. Deacons are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters except the ordination and conference relation of elders. Deacons not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall have no voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418.
4. Deacons may be appointed to serve as part of a ministry team in a local church (including as a pastor) or another ministry setting by the bishop, or they may secure their own position with the approval and appointment of the bishop. Deacons may continue to serve as a deacon indefinitely under appointment by the bishop and are encouraged to continue their education in regard to whatever ministry specialty they are called to pursue.
5. Deacons shall meet minimum educational requirements at the time of ordination as determined by this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (¶ 406.2b, c). Following ordination, deacons must fulfill the additional educational requirements established for deacons in ¶ 407.3b within seven (7) years. Deacons who do not complete all educational requirements within the allotted time shall be classified as inactive until such educational requirements are completed.

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6. Deacons considering a call to ordination as an elder, or in whom the gifts and graces for the ministry of elder are recognized by a bishop or presiding elder (district superintendent), may be appointed to the office of pastor in a local church. If such an appointment is more than a temporary assignment, a deacon who accepts such an appointment must declare candidacy for ordination as an elder and begin the process toward such ordination following the completion of all educational requirements as a deacon.

PARAGRAPH 410.1

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER REV. JEFFREY RICKMAN - NOWATA, OK (USA)

ORGANIZATION HEARTLAND CONFERENCE

RATIONALE Quality control of leadership must be exercised. The Order of Elders is a conciliar body and should exercise authority over the quality of its own membership. The timelines and documentation on each candidate will give elders time to learn about potential colleagues in ministry. It leaves final authority of the Order of Elders with the annual conference elders and removes potential veto power of the bishop.

¶ 410. ORDINATION AS ELDER.

1. Deacons who desire to be ordained as an elder shall declare their candidacy for such ordination to the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. They shall be eligible for ordination as elder once they:
 - a. Prove themselves faithful, mature, and effective over a period of a minimum of two years' service as a deacon;
 - b. Complete the educational requirements for ordination as an elder specified in ¶ 407.4a. . In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church;
 - c. Pass an advanced level examination in doctrine, history, discipline and Bible;
 - d. ~~Be interviewed and recommended by a two-thirds vote of the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent for ordination as an elder. In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church. The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church; and~~

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- e. ~~Be approved by two-thirds vote by the elders of the annual conference in executive session and be approved by the bishop.~~
 - d. Are evaluated by the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent to determine if the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church;
 - e. Are approved by the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent by a two-thirds vote, with voting restricted to one candidate at a time. The board will publish a slate of approved candidates at least two weeks prior to the convening of the annual conference where the candidates will be considered for ordination. The slate should include the answers to the *Ordination Questions* for each candidate, along with each candidate's resumé, and a short bio on each one;
 - f. Are questioned and approved by the clergy of the annual conference, in executive session, with voting restricted to one candidate at a time;
- 2. The additional educational requirements specified in ¶ 407.4b must be completed within seven (7) years of ordination as elder. Persons who do not complete such requirements in a timely manner shall be ineligible thereafter to serve in the office of pastor of a local church but may continue to serve in other capacities as a deacon.
 - 3. Elders are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters. An elder not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall not have voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418. Elders may be appointed by the bishop as a presiding elder (district superintendent), to local ministry as pastor in charge, to the staff of a local church, as a chaplain, as an evangelist, or to other ministry settings. Elders are eligible to be elected to the office of bishop.

PARAGRAPH 612.3 & 705.5

COMMITTEE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER REV. JEFFREY RICKMAN - NOWATA, OK (USA)

ORGANIZATION HEARTLAND CONFERENCE

RATIONALE Filthy lucre and love of money has always plagued the church. This petition seeks to reduce the temptation of those in authority to use money in ways that are self-serving or otherwise not in keeping with the wishes of the denomination. Requiring leadership to transparently report all finances will functionally remove all suspicion of impropriety from those in leadership. It will also obviously expose fraud or irresponsible handling of money much more easily than an audit process after the fact.

¶ 612. ANNUAL CONFERENCE BOARDS AND COMMITTEES. Annual Conferences shall create the following boards and committees:

1. *The Board of Ministry* — The Board of Ministry shall be responsible for overseeing the recruiting and credentialing of clergy for the furtherance of the mission of the Global Methodist Church.
(¶¶406-410, 418) The Board shall also be responsible for overseeing all clergy changes in conference relations. (¶¶415-418)
 - a. Members shall be nominated by the bishop and elected by the Annual Conference. The board shall include elders, deacons, and laity. No more than one-third of the Board may be laity. Annual Conferences shall set the number of members of the Board. Members shall serve for six years and may succeed themselves once. Notwithstanding other provisions of the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, deacons and laity on the Board of Ministry may vote on the ordination and conference relations of all clergy candidates.
 - b. If a member of the Board of Ministry cannot serve for any reason, the bishop, in consultation with the Cabinet, shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.
 - c. The Board of Ministry shall elect from its members a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.

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- d. The Board of Ministry may establish subcommittees and teams to assist it in its work.
2. *Episcopacy Committee* — The Committee on Episcopacy shall be responsible to support the bishop in the oversight of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Global Methodist Church, with special reference to the area where the bishop has residential responsibility.
- a. Members shall be nominated by the Conference Leadership Committee and elected by the annual conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee with a maximum of 12 persons serving at any one time and no less than six. Members shall serve six years and may not succeed themselves. No member of the conference staff or member of the bishop's family shall serve on the committee. The bishop shall serve on the committee with voice but not vote.
- b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the Leadership Committee, in consultation with the cabinet, shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.
- c. The Episcopacy Committee shall elect from its members a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.
- d. The committee shall meet only with the knowledge of the bishop. The bishop shall be present at each meeting of the committee, except where he or she voluntarily excuses himself or herself.
- e. The committee shall be available to the bishop for counsel including advising the bishop concerning conditions within the episcopal area as they affect relationships between the bishop and the people of the Annual Conference.
- f. Keeping in mind the roles, responsibilities, and duties laid in ¶¶502-504, the Committee shall engage in an annual evaluation of the Bishop in consultation with the Transitional Leadership Council.

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3. *Finance and Administration Committee* — The Finance and Administration Committee shall be responsible to develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, budgets, procedures, and management services for the annual conference.
- a. Members shall be nominated by the Conference Leadership Committee and elected by the annual conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee. Members shall serve six years and may succeed themselves once. The bishop, one presiding elder (district superintendent) chosen by the bishop, and the conference treasurer shall serve on the committee with voice but not vote.
 - b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the Leadership Committee shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.
 - c. The committee shall elect from its members a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.
 - d. The committee shall coordinate its work with the Transitional Leadership Council or its designee of the Global Methodist Church.
 - e. All financial requests to be included in the annual budget of the annual conference shall be submitted to the Finance and Administration Committee. The Finance and Administration Committee shall compile annually a complete budget for the annual conference and submit it to the assembled conference for review and adoption. The Finance and Administration Committee shall be charged with responsibility for developing and implementing plans that will raise sufficient income to meet the budget adopted by the assembled annual conference. It shall administer the funds received according to instructions from the annual conference by guiding the treasurer(s) and financial secretaries of the annual conference.

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- f. The Finance and Administration Committee shall establish written financial policies to document the internal controls of the annual conference. The written financial policies should be reviewed for adequacy and effectiveness annually by the Finance and Administration Committee and submitted as a report to the annual conference annually.
- g. The committee shall make provision for an annual audit of the financial statements of the annual conference and all its organizations and accounts. The committee shall make a full and complete report to the annual conference. The audit shall be conducted to reasonably verify the accuracy and reliability of financial reporting, determine whether assets are being safeguarded, and determine compliance with local law, annual conference policies and procedures, and the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. The audit shall be performed by an audit committee composed of persons unrelated to the persons listed in item a. above or by an independent certified public accountant (CPA), accounting firm, or equivalent.
- h. The committee shall recommend to the annual conference proper depositories for the annual conference funds. Funds received shall be deposited promptly into these depositories.
- i. Contributions designated for specific causes and objects shall be promptly forwarded according to the intent of the donor and shall not be retained or used for any other purpose.
- j. After the budget of the annual conference has been approved, additional appropriations or changes in the budget cannot be made unless approved by a called meeting of the annual conference.
- k. The committee, its chair, or the conference treasurer shall prepare monthly transparent financial reports on the balances of all funds under the umbrella of the annual conference. These reports shall be posted to the conference website in a timely fashion. All members of the annual conference shall have access to these reports without fee.
4. *Leadership Committee* — The Leadership Committee shall be responsible for nominating clergy and laity to serve on annual conference committees and boards.

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- a. Members shall be nominated by the bishop and elected by the Annual Conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee. Members shall serve six years and may not succeed themselves. The bishop and presiding elders (district superintendents) shall also serve on the committee with voice and vote in addition to the clergy and laity elected by the annual conference.
 - b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the bishop shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.
 - c. The bishop shall serve as the chair of the committee. The committee shall elect from its members a vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.
5. *Committee on Investigation* — The committee on investigation shall be responsible for considering judicial complaints against clergy as set out in Part Eight Judicial Administration of this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and specifically ¶809.2.
- a. There shall be seven members, four ordained clergy and three laity, and seven alternate members, four ordained clergy and three laity. None of the members or alternates shall be members of the Board of Ministry or the cabinet - or their immediate family members. Members shall serve three years and may succeed themselves once.
 - b. The bishop shall nominate persons for the committee, in consultation with the Board of Ministry (for the clergy members). Nominations shall reflect the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of the conference. The annual conference shall elect the committee, with the power to elect additional members or alternates during the term of office as needed. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character.
 - c. The committee on investigation shall elect a chair and secretary and organize at the annual conference following its election.

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- d. Should a member of the committee on investigation have been a party to any of the proceedings in the case that comes before the committee, he or she shall be disqualified from sitting on the committee during its consideration of that case, and an alternate member shall take his or her place.
 - e. Four clergy and three laity (or their alternates) seated as members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.
 - f. If an annual conference has not yet elected a committee on investigation, the bishop or president *pro tempore* shall appoint the members of the committee in consultation with the cabinet.
6. *Administrative Review Committee* — The administrative review committee (§ 805.2) shall be responsible for ensuring that the disciplinary procedures for resolving a substantiated administrative complaint are properly followed as required by *Judicial Practices and Procedures* 5.2 and fair process (§804).
- a. There shall be an administrative review committee in every annual conference composed of three ordained clergy and two alternates who are not members of the cabinet or the Board of Ministry – or their immediate family members. Members shall serve three years and may succeed themselves once.
 - b. The bishop shall nominate the members of the committee and the clergy session of the annual conference shall elect them. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character.
 - c. The administrative review committee shall elect a chair and secretary and organize at the annual conference following its election.
 - d. Should a member of the administrative review committee have been a party to any of the proceedings in the matter that comes before the committee, he or she shall be disqualified from sitting on the committee during its consideration of that case, and an alternate member shall take his or her place.

- e. Three clergy (or their alternates) seated as members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.
 - f. If an annual conference has not yet elected an administrative review committee, the bishop or president *pro tempore* shall appoint the members of the committee in consultation with the cabinet.
7. The annual conference may create additional boards and committees to accomplish its work, as it deems appropriate.

¶ 705. POTENTIAL TRANSITIONAL CONNECTIONAL COMMISSIONS. The Transitional Leadership Council may form transitional commissions dealing with any or all of these tasks or areas of ministry:

1. *Evangelism, Missions, and Church Planting* — Including, but not limited to, fostering cross-cultural and international partnerships between local churches, districts, and annual conferences; vetting, approving, and maintaining accountability for mission projects and their funding; providing for disaster relief and refugee ministry; identifying and providing resources for church planting in various cultural contexts; and consulting with bishops, annual conference leaders, and local churches to plan and strategize for planting churches.
2. *Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry* — Including, but not limited to, encouraging growth in discipleship through small groups; proposing liturgies and orders of worship for use by both local congregations and the general church for General Conference approval; resourcing understanding of our doctrines; and resourcing local churches in engaging with the church's social witness and social issues from a variety of political perspectives and from a biblical foundation.
3. *Ministry* — Including, but not limited to, implementing the standards and qualifications set for various forms of ministry; developing curricula for ministry training courses, including Course of Study; resourcing annual conference boards of ministry; ensuring adequate psychological and background evaluation for candidates; establishing and refining criteria and qualifications for various forms of non-parish ministry; evaluating and approving training programs that meet the criteria and qualifications; examining and credentialing persons for various forms of non-parish ministry; and supporting persons engaging in non-parish ministry.

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4. *Communications* — Including, but not limited to, resourcing local churches, annual conferences, and the general church in communication strategy and implementation; creating print and digital resources that communicate the work of the church; publishing the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*; translating communications and resources into the languages of the church; and growing the digital communication capability of the church.
 5. *Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits* — Including, but not limited to, overseeing the financial and fiduciary life of the general church to insure both its integrity and efficiency; reporting publicly the detailed expenses, ~~and income, and balances of all designated funds, endowments, and other monies inside and outside the expense budget~~; conducting an annual independent audit; collecting and distributing all income received by the general church; managing the legal work of the general church; giving oversight to the pension and benefits (i.e., health insurance, disability, etc.) programs for clergy and lay employees of the church worldwide; and encouraging conferences worldwide to provide adequate pension funding and medical care for those who serve in the church's ministry (active and retired). All financial reports shall be posted in a timely fashion to the Global Methodist Church website. Provision shall be made for all members of the Global Methodist Church to have access to all financial reporting without fee.
 6. Transitional commissions may also be formed in other areas not named above and assigned responsibility to develop policies and programs related to those other areas.

PARAGRAPH	500, ET. AL.
COMMITTEE	EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY
SUBMITTER	FLORIDA CONFERENCE DELEGATION
ORGANIZATION	FLORIDA CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	This model draws heavily from the WCA Draft Book of Doctrines and Disciplines. It allows annual conferences to select their bishops from an episcopal pool. Conferences have the choice of having their own bishop or sharing a bishop with other conferences. This model does not require interim bishops by utilizing conference superintendents (presidents pro tem) from 2024 through 2026 along with Bishops Jones and Webb. It's less costly than a general superintendent model and creates less bureaucracy.

PART FIVE

THE SUPERINTENDENCY

¶ **501. THE NATURE OF SUPERINTENDENCY.** From apostolic times, certain ordained persons have been set apart and entrusted with the task of defending the Apostolic faith and overseeing and leading the church in its mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ and to spread scriptural holiness across the world (¶ 301). While shared by the whole people of God, this apostolic task is most clearly expressed in the historic office of the *episkopos* (meaning overseer) or bishop. The Global Methodist Church is led, equipped, and supervised by an episcopacy modeled after that of the early centuries of Christianity and stemming from the historic line of Methodist bishops.

We share John Wesley's conviction that bishops and elders are part of the same New Testament order. Therefore, bishops in the Global Methodist Church represent a specialized ministry rather than a separate order and are consecrated rather than ordained to their office. The role of bishop is a sacred trust held for a time as the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of our church allows. It is not a lifelong office.

Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, the first Methodist bishops in America, exemplified an evangelistic and missionary spirit that we trust will be shared by every bishop in the Global Methodist Church. The episcopal office is to keep us relentlessly focused outward toward our mission field. Our bishops must not lean on the trappings of ecclesial office but lead us from an authentic, humble, and evangelistic love for God and neighbor.

The bishop's primary place of servant leadership shall be to an annual conference or conferences of our church. When convened together, the bishops of the Global Methodist Church comprise a general superintendency that leads our church in spiritual and temporal matters. In addition to residing in the office of bishop, the task of superintending in the Global Methodist Church extends to the presiding elder (~~district superintendent~~), with each possessing distinct and collegial responsibilities.

Section I. The Office and Responsibilities of a Bishop

¶ 502. ROLE AND QUALIFICATIONS. Bishops are elected from among those within the order of elders and set apart for a ministry of visionary servant leadership, general oversight, and supervision in support of the Church in its mission. As followers of Jesus Christ, bishops are charged with guarding the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Church. The basis of such discipleship of leadership lies in a life characterized by personal integrity, spiritual disciplines, and the anointing and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Bishops shall be persons of genuine faith, upstanding moral character, and possess the gift of encouragement, a vital and renewing spirit, and possess an engaging vision for the church. Candidates for the episcopacy should also have a strong record of effectiveness in leading the church in evangelism, discipleship, and mission, and shall be unwaveringly committed to uphold the doctrines and polity of our church, able and committed to effectively teach and communicate the historic Christian faith from a Wesleyan perspective. (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3; 1 Timothy 3:1-7)

¶503. THE ROLE OF BISHOPS. Bishops are elected from among the elders and set apart for a ministry of servant leadership, encouragement, general oversight, and supervision. Bishops are charged to guard the faith, order, unity, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church. Bishops focus the people of God outward toward our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ in the world. Bishops are to have the witness of personal faith and spiritual maturity. Specifically, bishops shall have the authority and responsibility to do the following:

1. Lead and oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Global Methodist Church which confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and particularly to lead the Global Methodist Church in its mission of witness and service in the world
2. Exercise a strong teaching office in the life of the church, communicating and defending the cause of Christ and the doctrines of the church. Sermons and studies of the bishop may become resources for use by the clergy and laity of the church.
3. Defend, communicate, uphold, and enforce the order, doctrines, and disciplines of the church as provided for in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.
4. Work with annual conference leadership to set vision and build a clear and articulated missional strategy for the conference. This strategy may include action plans and benchmarks aimed at advancing the Kingdom of Christ through initiatives related to establishing new faith communities, growing vital congregations, making mature disciples of Jesus Christ and serving in ministries of justice and mercy.
5. Encourage, inspire, and motivate the clergy, laity, and churches of the annual conference to embrace and implement the vision and missional strategy of the annual conference as well as the vision and mission of the Global Methodist Church.
6. Provide general oversight to the spiritual, missional, temporal, and programmatic affairs of the annual conference he or she serves. This oversight may include special inquiry into the work of annual conference committees and agencies to ensure that the provisions of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and annual conference and general church policies and procedures are followed. Bishops may be allowed to serve more than one annual conference, provided, however, that the provisions of ¶506 are followed.
7. As part of the bishop's missional responsibilities, they shall engage and participate in local churches in their Annual Conference to help strengthen congregations and build relationships with people of local churches.

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8. Make and fix the appointments in the annual conference to which he or she is assigned as the Book of Doctrines and Discipline directs.
 9. Appoint the presiding elders. To convene together and supervise the presiding elders and conference officers who shall constitute the cabinet of the annual conference.
 10. Form the districts after consultation with the presiding elders and after a vote of the annual conference has determined the number of districts.
 11. Serve as an ex officio member of the conference's board of ministry with voice but not vote. The endorsement of the bishop shall be required for each candidate before recommendation to the clergy session for approval. In instances where a candidate may be approved by the board but not recommended by the bishop, the bishop shall provide just cause for his or her decision to both the board and the candidate.
 12. Preside in the ordination of clergy, provided that a bishop may not ordain individuals without the consent of the appropriate annual conference bodies.
 13. Keep and maintain appropriate supervisory and personnel records on the clergy within his or her annual conference, including presiding elders, as well as on conference staff.
 14. In consultation and conjunction with the conference board of ministry, suspend clergy (with pay continued by their salary-paying unit) for a maximum of six months pending resolution of administrative or other complaints.
 15. Preside at the annual conference and convene the clergy members together at other times as deemed appropriate.
 16. Share with other bishops in the oversight of the whole church through the Assembly of Bishops, including presiding when selected at General Conference sessions.
 17. Participate in the consecration of other bishops selected in keeping with our historic practices and discipline.

¶ 504. COMPENSATION AND SALARY UNIT. The following provisions shall govern the compensation of bishops:

1. The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, other benefits, and travel and office expenses for bishops serving within the United States shall lie with the annual conference(s) to which he or she has been assigned. Bishops will be considered as employees of their respective annual conference(s). The Global Episcopacy Committee shall establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living and the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area.
2. The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, other benefits, and travel and office expenses for bishops serving in an episcopal area outside of the United States shall be borne by the general church through partnerships with U.S. annual conferences, though such bishops shall be considered employees of some entity within their episcopal area. The Global Episcopacy Committee shall establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living, the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area, and the currency exchange rate.
3. Each episcopal area within the United States shall partner with one or more episcopal areas elsewhere in the world to provide the necessary funds for the bishop's salary, benefits, and episcopal office within those areas. Such funds will be raised in the U.S. and passed through the general church, designated for that episcopal area. Where partnerships do not provide adequate resources to cover the episcopal office costs, general church connectional funding may be used to fund episcopal costs as needed.
4. Costs for episcopal travel outside the episcopal area on behalf of the general church, (e.g., Assembly of Bishops meetings) shall be paid out of general church funds, not conference or partnership funds.

Section II. Selection and Assignment of Bishops.

¶505. SELECTION OF BISHOPS. Before the 2026 General Conference and each regular session of the General Conference thereafter, each annual conference may nominate up to two elders for consideration in the episcopal selection process. The names and profiles of these nominees shall be submitted to the secretary of the General Conference who shall compile the ballot and election materials. From this ballot

General Conference shall elect an episcopal pool consisting of not less than the number of annual conferences. A sixty percent majority shall be needed for election. Consideration shall be given to make each episcopal pool inclusive with respect to gender, race, and the various nationalities represented in the Global Methodist Church.

Persons in the pool continue to serve as elders under appointment in the normal way until they are selected by a conference episcopacy committee to serve as a bishop in that conference (¶506). The bishop shall remain a clergy member of the annual conference from which they were selected, both before and after being selected.

¶506. VACANCIES WITHIN THE EPISCOPACY.

1. When an episcopal vacancy occurs within an annual conference, the conference episcopacy committee shall conduct a search from among those clergy elected to the episcopal pool at the most recent regularly scheduled General Conference. The conference episcopacy committee shall make their selection by a two-thirds vote, contingent upon the consent of the prospective bishop. The selection of the episcopacy committee shall be ratified by the Assembly of Bishops and the Global Episcopacy Committee by a simple majority vote.
2. Annual conferences may share a bishop, provided, however, that the conference episcopacy committees of the annual conferences will work together to approve a joint plan of supervision, ministry, and funding. Such plan must be ratified by the Global Episcopacy Committee. In such case, the relevant conference episcopacy committees shall constitute a joint episcopacy committee for the purpose of selecting a new bishop.
3. An episcopal vacancy shall exist when (1) a bishop reaches their maximum term of office, (2) when a death, resignation, or incapacity occurs, (3) a bishop is removed as elsewhere set forth in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, or (4) when two-thirds of the Global Episcopacy Committee declares the seat open upon a request by two-thirds of the conference episcopacy committee.

4. There shall be a thorough review of the bishop's effectiveness by the conference episcopacy committee at least every two years, and a report from this review shall be shared with the bishop and the Global Episcopacy Committee.

¶507. LENGTH OF SERVICE. Clergy may not serve in the capacity of bishop for longer than twelve years, except as needed for service as an interim bishop. (Bishops transferring from autonomous Methodist Churches are subject to the provisions of ¶511.) A former bishop in good standing shall bear the title of bishop *emeritus*. A bishop *emeritus* shall be a clergy member of the annual conference of their choice and may serve in active ministry as an elder under appointment or, if they choose senior status, in any capacity allowed for senior clergy (¶ 418). A bishop may serve more than one episcopal area during their twelve-year maximum term with the consent of the Global Episcopacy Committee. This consent returns the name of a bishop to the episcopal pool for possible redeployment. At the next regularly scheduled Global Conference a former bishop with remaining service years may be re-elected to the episcopal pool, but the bishop's total years of episcopal service may not exceed twelve years. For the sake of the church's mission, the Global Episcopacy Committee may by a two-thirds vote grant a two-year extension to the maximum term limit of bishops. The term of service for bishops begins at the effective date of employment by an episcopal area or annual conference.

¶508. INTERIM BISHOPS. When a bishop is needed for an interim period in a conference, the Global Episcopacy Committee may provide a clergy from the episcopal pool or a clergy in good standing who has previously served as bishop. The appointment of an interim bishop requires the consent, by a simple majority, of the conference episcopacy committee and the Assembly of Bishops.

¶509. THE CONSECRATION OF BISHOPS. The consecration of bishops shall take place in the annual conference to which they are deployed. At least two other bishops should be present and representation from other Christian communions is strongly suggested. The Service of Consecration is repeatable and shall be held whenever a bishop is consecrated for leadership in a particular conference.

¶ 510. LEAVES.

1. Leave of Absence — A bishop may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months by the Global Episcopacy Committee. During the period for which the leave is granted, an interim bishop shall serve in the annual conference subject to the provisions of ¶508.
2. Medical Leave — Bishops who because of impaired health are temporarily unable to perform full work may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months by the Global Episcopacy Committee. During the period for which the leave is granted, an interim bishop shall serve in the annual conference subject to the provisions of ¶508. If, after the six months is over, the bishop is still unable to perform full work due to impaired health, the bishop should apply for disability benefits through the benefit program.

¶511. PERIOD BETWEEN 2024 AND 2026.

1. Interim Bishops — Bishops Scott J. Jones and Mark J. Webb and any other bishops received as interim bishops by the Global Episcopacy Committee and Assembly of Bishops shall continue to serve as bishops of the Global Methodist Church through the adjournment of the 2026 General Conference. With their consent, they will automatically be placed in the episcopal pool in 2026 (¶505) and be available to be selected by an annual conference.
2. Conference Superintendents — All presidents *pro tempore* of the Global Methodist Church shall be retitled conference superintendent at the adjournment of the 2024 General Conference. Conference superintendents shall have the same authority as a bishop (as provided for in Part Five of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*) except for the authority to ordain (¶503.12). Ordination will be carried out by Bishops Jones, Webb, or any other interim bishops, as well as any bishops *emeriti* that they authorize to join them in carrying out ordinations.

Between 2024 and 2026, conference superintendents shall provide spiritual and temporal leadership to the conferences they serve in accordance with Part Five of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Between 2024 and 2026, Bishops Jones and Webb shall serve as general superintendents and provide spiritual and temporal leadership to annual conferences that do not have a conference superintendent as well as newly formed or in formation provisional conferences and districts.

Conference superintendents will end their service as a conference superintendent once a bishop has been consecrated to serve their annual conference.

3. *Other Interim Bishops* — A bishop of another Methodist or Wesleyan church may join the Global Methodist Church by clergy transfer and be received as an interim bishop. Transfer application shall include an explicit written affirmation of the doctrines, Social Witness, and church government set forth in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Transferring bishops shall also agree to uphold the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Such a transfer is subject to the approval of the Global Episcopacy Committee and the Assembly of Bishops.

When a bishop is received between sessions of the General Conference, they shall continue to serve as the bishop of the churches over which they previously exercised oversight, provided those churches also join the Global Methodist Church. If the bishop transfers without bringing any churches with them, they shall enter the pool of those eligible to serve as bishops and are eligible to be selected by an annual conference under the provisions of ¶ 504. With their consent, all transferred interim bishops will be placed in the episcopal pool in 2026 (¶505) and be available to be selected by an annual conference (¶ 511.1).

Section III. Episcopacy Committees.

¶512. THE GLOBAL EPISCOPACY COMMITTEE. There shall be a Global Episcopacy Committee comprised of half clergy and half laity. Each annual conference, through its annual nominations process, will select one clergyperson and one layperson to represent their conference on the Global Episcopacy Committee. Each member of the committee shall serve for six years and may succeed themselves once. Vacancies between General Conference will be filled by the annual conference represented by the vacant position through its nominations process as provided for in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. The Global Episcopacy Committee shall:

1. Foster a vital, healthy, accountable episcopacy in the Global Methodist Church.

2. Approve (by simple majority) the deployment of clergy from the episcopal pool as bishops in annual conferences by recommendation of the conference episcopacy committee (¶506.1).
3. Approve plans for interim episcopal leadership (¶ 508).
4. Declare an episcopal seat vacant. In the case of bishops not at the end of their term, this shall require a two-thirds majority recommendation of the conference episcopacy committee and a two-thirds vote of the Global Episcopacy Committee (¶ 506.3).
5. Receive evaluations of bishops by conference episcopacy committees (¶ 506.4).
6. Receive and process complaints against bishops as provided for in part Part Eight (Judicial Administration) of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.
6. Meet with the Assembly of Bishops as agreed to best serve the mission of the church and the effectiveness of the committee.
7. Approve guidelines for the conference episcopacy committees related to the salary and benefits of bishops, provided that bishops shall have the same pension program as other clergy (¶ 504).
8. The Global Episcopacy Committee shall elect its chair, vice-chair, and secretary. The chair and vice-chair must come from different annual conferences.

¶513. THE CONFERENCE EPISCOPACY COMMITTEE. There shall be an episcopacy committee in each annual conference elected from the annual conference session to include half clergy and half laity. The committee shall:

1. Foster a healthy relationship between the bishop and annual conference.
2. Evaluate the bishop at least every other year and share this evaluation with the bishop and the Global Episcopacy Committee.
3. Meet at least twice annually. The bishop shall be present at all meetings unless permission is granted to meet without the bishop by the chair of the Global Episcopacy Committee. In such cases, a representative from the Global Episcopacy Committee shall be present.

4. When an episcopal vacancy exists in the annual conference, the committee on episcopacy shall conduct a search from among the clergy elected to the episcopal pool by the most recent General Conference. Their selection must be approved by the selected person, the Assembly of Bishops, and the Global Episcopacy Committee. The salary and benefits of the bishop may be negotiated with the candidate in keeping with the guidelines developed by the Global Episcopacy Committee.
5. Plan the consecration of the bishop at the beginning of his or her term.
6. When two or more annual conferences choose to have one bishop provide episcopal leadership for the two or more annual conferences, the committee shall work with the other conference committee(s) on episcopacy to determine a funding structure for the bishop's compensation and a joint plan for supervision and ministry. This plan, once agreed upon by the conference episcopacy committees, must be ratified by the Global Episcopacy Committee (¶ 506.2).

Section IV. Assembly of Bishops.

¶514. THE ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS. By virtue of their election and consecration, bishops, including interim bishops, are members of the Assembly of Bishops and are bound together in a special covenant. Bishops *emeriti* shall not be members of the Assembly. As the collegial expression of episcopal leadership, the Assembly of Bishops speaks pastorally to the church and from the church to the world. The Assembly of Bishops shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Provide a faith community of mutual trust, concern, and accountability which results in the sanctification and well-being of its members.
2. Watch over one another in love, in cooperation and in consultation with the Global Episcopacy Committee.
3. Plan for the growth, vitality, and extension of the church.
4. Organize the assembly as deemed most helpful to the mission of the church.
5. Issue teaching documents as may correct errors, provide theological and moral guidance, and deepen faith.

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6. Exercise temporal leadership as defined by the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.
 7. Ensure effective consultation in the appointment process.
 8. Designate trained and qualified persons to preside over church trials as described in The Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules of the Global Methodist Church.
 9. Nominate one or more persons to be the Connectional Operations Officer. The Connectional Operations Officer shall be elected by the Connectional Council.
 10. Lead the ecumenical work of the Global Methodist Church and shepherd the Church toward greater unity.

Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline Current Paragraphs

¶515 - Deleted in its entirety

¶516 - Deleted in its entirety

¶517 - Deleted in its entirety

¶518 - Deleted in its entirety

¶519 - Deleted in its entirety

¶520 - Deleted in its entirety

¶521 - Deleted in its entirety

PARAGRAPH 505 / 610 / 704

COMMITTEE EPISCOPACY & SUPERINTENDENCY

SUBMITTER REV. JEFFREY RICKMAN - NOWATA, OK (USA)

ORGANIZATION HEARTLAND CONFERENCE

RATIONALE John Wesley warned of the spiritually corrosive impact that too much wealth causes. The first generation of Methodist leadership knew the importance of simple and humble living. If the GMC is to reclaim our heritage, we must ensure that leadership does not get rich off the gospel. Those working for the denomination, including bishops, should not be in fear of poverty, but they should not live in worldly wealth. Instead, they should pursue leadership for other reasons.

¶ 505. COMPENSATION AND SALARY UNIT.

1. The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, and travel and office expenses for bishops serving within the United States shall lie with the annual conference(s) to which he or she has been assigned. Bishops will be considered as employees of their respective annual conference(s). The Transitional Leadership Council will establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living and will be capped at the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area. If the bishop serves multiple annual conferences, the compensation will be capped at the average salary of all full-time elders in the episcopal area/ annual conference from the previous year plus 3% to adjust for inflation.
2. The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, and travel and office expenses for bishops serving in an episcopal area outside of the United States shall be borne by the general church through partnerships with U.S. annual conferences, though such bishops shall be considered employees of some entity within their episcopal area. The Transitional Leadership Council will establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living, and will be capped at the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area, and the currency exchange rate. If the bishop serves multiple annual conferences, the compensation will be capped at the average salary of all full-time elders in the episcopal area/ annual conferences from the previous year plus, 3% to adjust for inflation.

3. Each episcopal area within the United States shall partner with one or more episcopal areas elsewhere in the world to provide the necessary funds for the episcopal office within those areas. Such funds will be raised in the U.S. and passed through the general church, designated for that episcopal area. The Transitional Leadership Council shall arrange such partnerships based on the financial resources any given U.S. conference can reasonably provide. Where partnerships do not provide adequate resources to cover the episcopal office costs, general church connectional funding may be used to fund episcopal costs as needed.
4. Costs for episcopal travel outside the episcopal area on behalf of the general church, (e.g., Council of Bishops meetings) shall be paid out of general church funds, not conference partnership funds.

¶ 610. ORGANIZATION.

1. *Composition* — Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability across a geographical region. A special annual conference or district that is not geographically bound and overlaps the boundaries of other annual conferences or districts can be formed by the decision of Transitional Leadership Council at the request of a group of churches. The voting membership of an annual conference shall be composed of those elders, deacons, and transitional local pastors under appointment (except as limited by ¶ 419.2b) and senior clergy who meet the qualifications of ¶ 418, as well as at least an equal number of lay members elected by each charge or by the district or annual conference. Each charge shall be entitled to as many lay members as it has appointed clergy. The annual conference may add lay members of the annual conference who are serving in conference leadership positions. The annual conference shall determine the method of electing additional lay members to equalize the number of clergy members. Only laity shall vote in the election of equaling laity. Such members may be elected by a charge conference, district conference, or the annual conference, but they must be elected and not appointed.

2. When at any time a lay member is unable to attend the session, the alternate lay member, if present, shall be seated. The lay member or the alternate, whichever is seated, has the responsibility of the lay member to report to the local church on actions of the annual conference.
3. If not otherwise a voting member of the annual conference, the conference chancellor shall be seated in the annual conference and shall be given the privilege of the floor without vote.
4. An annual conference may incorporate under the law of the countries, states, and other political entities within whose bounds they are located.
5. The bishop shall appoint the time and place for holding the annual conference, in coordination with whatever committee or group is tasked with planning and organizing the conference.
6. Where necessary due to local conditions that prevent the physical assembling of delegates, the bishop may, with a two-thirds vote of the cabinet, authorize the conducting of the conference via electronic or other digital means.
7. A special session of the annual conference may be held at such time and in such place as shall have been determined by the annual conference after consultation with the bishop, or by the bishop with the concurrence of three-fourths of the presiding elders (district superintendents). A special session of the annual conference shall have only such powers as are stated in the call, unless the annual conference by a two-thirds vote shall determine that other business may be transacted.
8. The bishop assigned shall preside over the annual conference or, in case of inability, shall arrange for another bishop to preside. In the absence of a bishop, the conference shall by ballot, without debate, elect a president *pro tempore* from among the ordained elders. The president thus elected shall discharge all the duties of a bishop except ordination.
9. The annual conference shall elect a secretary and such other officers as it may determine.
10. The Bishop or President Pro Tempore of an annual conference may approve the hiring of staff persons to resource the work of the annual conference, paid for out of annual conference funds. He or she will make all hiring decisions and recommend compensation levels to the annual conference cabinet for approval. Compensation will be capped at the average salary of all full-time elders in the episcopal area/annual conference from the previous year, plus 3% to adjust for inflation.

¶ 704. PURPOSE AND COMPOSITION.

1. *Purpose* — During the period of transition between the adoption of this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* by the Transitional Leadership Council and the effective date of actions taken by the convening General Conference, the Transitional Leadership Council may appoint transitional connectional commissions to begin the work of organizing and administering the connectional ministries of the denomination. The Transitional Leadership Council shall define the scope of work for any commission so formed and shall have the right of final approval of any policies or actions recommended by a commission. These decisions are subject to approval, modification, or revocation by the convening General Conference and shall be in effect only until the convening General Conference establishes permanent policies and procedures that would replace them. Following the convening General Conference, the work of the transitional connectional commissions shall be transitioned into the connectional commissions established and formed by that body.
2. *Membership* — The Transitional Leadership Council shall determine the number of members for any transitional commission it establishes. The Transitional Leadership Council shall elect members for each commission by majority vote, based on the expertise and gifts they bring to the tasks of a commission. Care shall be taken to include persons from a broad range of racial, ethnic, tribal, gender, economic, and age characteristics. All potential geographical regions of the denomination should be represented. No person may serve simultaneously on more than one transitional commission. Commission members, including the officers, shall serve without remuneration. Travel and meeting expenses shall be paid for commission members by the Transitional Leadership Council out of general church funds.
3. *Leadership* — The Transitional Leadership Council shall name the chair of each transitional commission. The commission shall elect a secretary and may elect other officers to facilitate its work. No bishop may serve as the chair of a commission while serving in the episcopal office. Each transitional commission may have one bishop, selected by the Transitional Leadership Council, serving with voice and vote to help maintain communication and coordination with the bishops and to provide spiritual leadership to the commission.

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4. *Staff* — The Transitional Leadership Council may approve the hiring of staff persons to resource the work of the transitional commissions, paid for out of general church funds. The chair of the Transitional Leadership Council shall make all hiring decisions and recommend compensation levels to the Transitional Leadership Council for approval. Compensation will be capped at the average salary of all full-time elders in the episcopal area/annual conference from the previous year plus 3% to adjust for inflation.
5. *Nondiscrimination* — The Global Methodist Church is committed to open and fair processes in its commissions and institutions, including in the hiring, retention, compensation, promotion, and retirement of staff. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of gender, race, color, national origin, disability, current or potential pregnancy, or chronic or potentially terminal illnesses, provided that the individual is able to adequately discharge the duties assigned to her or him. As a part of our witness, individuals employed by the church shall subscribe to the doctrinal and moral standards of the Global Methodist Church and give evidence of the same in their life and ministry, including faithfulness in marriage, understood to be between one man and one woman, or chastity in singleness.

PARAGRAPH	609 / 601 / 604.7 / 604.10 / 6-4.16
COMMITTEE	CONFERENCES
SUBMITTER	REV. JEFFREY RICKMAN - NOWATA, OK (USA)
ORGANIZATION	HEARTLAND CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	Overly-complicated governance requires additional funding and creates opportunity for bad behavior. While some small benefits may come with regional conferences, the potential threats outweigh potential benefits. Annual conferences are sufficient to meet the needs of churches in their areas. This petition will effectively remove the possibility of creating structures between the annual conferences and the General Conference.

¶601. THE CONFERENCE SYSTEM. Beginning in 1744 when John Wesley first met with his brother Charles and a few other clergymen to consider "how we should proceed to save our own souls and those that heard us," the principal expression of connectionalism within Methodism has historically been within its conference system. The agenda for the first conference was a simple one: "1. What to teach, 2. How to teach, and 3. What to do, that is, how to regulate our doctrine, discipline, and practice," and the agenda for that and subsequent meetings was generally expressed in a question and answer format Organized at multiple levels — charge conferences, district conferences, annual conferences, ~~regional conferences~~, and a general conference — the conference system is at the spiritual center of Methodism and refers not simply to a meeting and the decisions that may be made in such a setting, but both to the act of gathering together in holy conferencing, and to the persons themselves who do so. The conference system provides for collective discernment and collective decision-making as the governing principle of our church polity (Proverbs 15:22, Acts 15:1-35).

¶ 604. POWERS. The convening General Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters that are distinctly connectional, including, but not limited to:

1. Adopt a constitution for the Global Methodist Church.
2. Ensure the mission of the church is kept foremost by all of the ministries, agencies, clergy, laity, and officers of the Global Methodist Church. In doing so, the convening General Conference shall remember that disciples of Jesus are made at the level of the local church. The convening General Conference shall endeavor to keep as many resources at the local church level as possible, so that the mission of the Global Methodist Church can be achieved.

3. Define the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of those who serve as deacons, elders, supply pastors, and other leaders within the Global Methodist Church.
4. Establish the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of church membership, which shall be open to all who believe, irrespective of race, color, ethnic or tribal identity, gender, or disability.
5. Define the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of the episcopacy and provide for their selection, continuance, and discontinuance. All bishops shall be accountable to the general church through the provisions of Part Eight (Judicial Administration) of this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*.
6. Determine the powers of ~~regional~~, annual, district, and church/charge conferences and other connectional associations within the Global Methodist Church, providing as appropriate for each such body to adapt structures that may best maximize their mission.
7. Determine the boundaries of ~~regional conferences, and where there are no regional conferences, to determine the boundaries of~~ annual conferences.
8. Establish and give oversight to such general boards, program agencies, or commissions and to form ministry partnerships as shall be deemed necessary for strengthening and promoting the mission of the Global Methodist Church through the local church.
9. Determine a program for raising and distributing the funds that are necessary for the work of the Church.
10. Fix the ratio of representation to the General ~~and any regional~~ conferences, based upon the number of professing members in each annual conference ~~and region~~, and other factors determined by the General Conference.
11. Approve and revise music resources and worship rituals of the Global Methodist Church, providing for variations as shall be most helpful to particular contexts worldwide, including making such resources available digitally.

12. Provide a judicial system mandating uniform processes and procedures and protecting the rights of all those within the Global Methodist Church.
13. Act upon petitions received dealing with church organization and polity, and resolutions dealing with non-disciplinary matters.
14. Adopt or revise a statement of Our Social Witness, provided that such adoption or revision shall require a three-quarters vote of the convening General Conference.
15. To effectively speak on behalf of the whole church, resolutions dealing with social concerns shall similarly require the support of three-quarters of the convening General Conference. All resolutions not part of Our Social Witness or church law shall remain in effect only until the next General Conference convenes when they may or may not be revised or reapproved.
16. ~~In the absence of a regional conference, p~~ Provide for the oversight and/or governance of institutions related to the church such as hospitals, schools, or other such entities.
17. To enact other legislation it determines would be helpful to the mission of the Global Methodist Church.

~~¶ 609. REGIONAL CONFERENCES.~~ ~~The Transitional Leadership Council or the convening General Conference may establish regional conferences for the purposes of coordinating and conducting the mission of the Church around the world. The Transitional Leadership Council or the convening General Conference shall determine the powers, authority, and boundaries of the regional conference. The regional conferences shall be composed of clergy and lay delegates in equal number elected from the annual conferences within each regional conference. General Conference delegates shall also serve as delegates to the regional conference. Where necessary due to conditions that prevent the physical assembling of delegates, the Transitional Leadership Council or the regional college of bishops may, with a two-thirds vote, authorize the conducting of the conference via electronic or other digital means.~~

PARAGRAPH 409.3

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER HANFIELD GMC CHURCH COUNCIL - MARION, IN (USA)

ORGANIZATION GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE

RATIONALE According to ¶403 Ordination is a lifetime office. Because a Deacon's primary connection is not a local church, but with the conference (¶409.3), it is unjust to remove their ability to vote at annual conference. This removes the ability to have meaningful impact on the only body to which they are formally connected. Further, in this season as many pastors have found themselves in difficult circumstances transitioning from UMC to GMC, it is particularly inhospitable to disallow them to vote.

¶ 409. ORDINATION AS DEACON. Within the Global Methodist Church, certified candidates must first be ordained as deacons and, after ordination as deacons, may be ordained as elders.

1. *Ordination Questions* — Upon completion of the educational requirements of ¶ 406.2b and ¶407.3a, and passing a deacon's level knowledge examination in doctrine, history, discipline, and Bible, a candidate for ordination as deacon shall be interviewed by the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. During such interview, the candidate shall be asked the following questions:
 - (a) *What is your personal experience of God?*
 - (b) *What is your understanding of evil?*
 - (c) *What is your understanding of grace?*
 - (d) *How do you understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers and in the Church?*
 - (e) *What is your understanding of the Kingdom of God?*
 - (f) *What significance do you believe that the resurrection holds?*
 - (g) *What is your understanding of the nature and authority of Scripture?*
 - (h) *What is your understanding of the nature and mission of the Church?*
 - (i) *What gifts and graces do you bring to the work of ministry?*
 - (j) *What is the meaning of ordination?*

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- (k) *What is the role and significance of the sacraments?*
- (l) *Have you studied our form of church discipline and polity and will you support and maintain it?*
- (m) *For the sake of the church's witness, are you willing to dedicate yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life, exercising self-control in your personal habits, integrity in all of your relationships and if married, fidelity in your covenant with your spouse, or if single, chastity in your personal conduct?*

In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church.

The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church.

2. The annual conference board of ministry or equivalent will interview the candidate for readiness for ordination as a deacon. After being interviewed and recommended by the annual conference board of ministry by a two-thirds vote and approved by a two-thirds vote of the clergy of the annual conference in executive session and by the bishop, a certified candidate shall become a full member of the annual conference and be ordained as deacon by the bishop through the laying on of hands.
3. Deacons are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters except the ordination and conference relation of elders. Deacons not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall have no voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418.

4. Deacons may be appointed to serve as part of a ministry team in a local church (including as a pastor) or another ministry setting by the bishop, or they may secure their own position with the approval and appointment of the bishop. Deacons may continue to serve as a deacon indefinitely under appointment by the bishop and are encouraged to continue their education in regard to whatever ministry specialty they are called to pursue.
5. Deacons shall meet minimum educational requirements at the time of ordination as determined by this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (§ 406.2b, c). Following ordination, deacons must fulfill the additional educational requirements established for deacons in § 407.3b within seven (7) years. Deacons who do not complete all educational requirements within the allotted time shall be classified as inactive until such educational requirements are completed.
6. Deacons considering a call to ordination as an elder, or in whom the gifts and graces for the ministry of elder are recognized by a bishop or presiding elder (district superintendent), may be appointed to the office of pastor in a local church. If such an appointment is more than a temporary assignment, a deacon who accepts such an appointment must declare candidacy for ordination as an elder and begin the process toward such ordination following the completion of all educational requirements as a deacon.

(Change)

¶ 409. ORDINATION AS DEACON. Within the Global Methodist Church, certified candidates must first be ordained as deacons and, after ordination as deacons, may be ordained as elders.

1. *Ordination Questions* — Upon completion of the educational requirements of § 406.2b and § 407.3a, and passing a deacon's level knowledge examination in doctrine, history, discipline, and Bible, a candidate for ordination as deacon shall be interviewed by the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. During such interview, the candidate shall be asked the following questions:
 - (a) *What is your personal experience of God?*
 - (b) *What is your understanding of evil?*

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- (c) *What is your understanding of grace?*
 - (d) *How do you understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers and in the Church?*
 - (e) *What is your understanding of the Kingdom of God?*
 - (f) *What significance do you believe that the resurrection holds?*
 - (g) *What is your understanding of the nature and authority of Scripture?*
 - (h) *What is your understanding of the nature and mission of the Church?*
 - (i) *What gifts and graces do you bring to the work of ministry?*
 - (j) *What is the meaning of ordination?*
 - (k) *What is the role and significance of the sacraments?*
 - (l) *Have you studied our form of church discipline and polity and will you support and maintain it?*
 - (m) *For the sake of the church's witness, are you willing to dedicate yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life, exercising self-control in your personal habits, integrity in all of your relationships and if married, fidelity in your covenant with your spouse, or if single, chastity in your personal conduct?*

In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church.

The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church.

2. The annual conference board of ministry or equivalent will interview the candidate for readiness for ordination as a deacon. After being interviewed and recommended by the annual conference board of ministry by a two-thirds vote and approved by a two-thirds vote of the clergy of the annual conference in executive session and by the bishop, a certified candidate shall become a full member of the annual conference and be ordained as deacon by the bishop through the laying on of hands.
3. Deacons are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters except the ordination and conference relation of elders. ~~Deacons not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall have no voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418.~~
4. Deacons may be appointed to serve as part of a ministry team in a local church (including as a pastor) or another ministry setting by the bishop, or they may secure their own position with the approval and appointment of the bishop. Deacons may continue to serve as a deacon indefinitely under appointment by the bishop and are encouraged to continue their education in regard to whatever ministry specialty they are called to pursue.
5. Deacons shall meet minimum educational requirements at the time of ordination as determined by this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (¶ 406.2b, c). Following ordination, deacons must fulfill the additional educational requirements established for deacons in ¶ 407.3b within seven (7) years. Deacons who do not complete all educational requirements within the allotted time shall be classified as inactive until such educational requirements are completed.
6. Deacons considering a call to ordination as an elder, or in whom the gifts and graces for the ministry of elder are recognized by a bishop or presiding elder (district superintendent), may be appointed to the office of pastor in a local church. If such an appointment is more than a temporary assignment, a deacon who accepts such an appointment must declare candidacy for ordination as an elder and begin the process toward such ordination following the completion of all educational requirements as a deacon.

PARAGRAPH 410.3

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER HANFIELD GMC CHURCH COUNCIL - MARION, IN (USA)

ORGANIZATION GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE

RATIONALE According to ¶403 Ordination is a lifetime office. Because an Elder's primary connection is not a local church, but with the conference (¶410.3), it is unjust to remove their ability to vote at annual conference. This removes the ability to have meaningful impact on the body to which they are formally connected. Further, in this season as many pastors have found themselves in difficult circumstances in the transition from UMC to GMC, it is particularly inhospitable to disallow them to vote.

¶ 410. ORDINATION AS ELDER.

1. Deacons who desire to be ordained as an elder shall declare their candidacy for such ordination to the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. They shall be eligible for ordination as elder once they:
 - a. Prove themselves faithful, mature, and effective over a period of a minimum of two years' service as a deacon;
 - b. Complete the educational requirements for ordination as an elder specified in ¶ 407.4a.
 - c. Pass an advanced level examination in doctrine, history, discipline and Bible;
 - d. Be interviewed and recommended by a two-thirds vote of the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent for ordination as an elder. In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church. The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church; and
 - e. Be approved by two-thirds vote by the elders of the annual conference in executive session and be approved by the bishop.

2. The additional educational requirements specified in ¶ 407.4b must be completed within seven (7) years of ordination as elder. Persons who do not complete such requirements in a timely manner shall be ineligible thereafter to serve in the office of pastor of a local church but may continue to serve in other capacities as a deacon.
3. Elders are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters. An elder not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall not have voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418. Elders may be appointed by the bishop as a presiding elder (district superintendent), to local ministry as pastor in charge, to the staff of a local church, as a chaplain, as an evangelist, or to other ministry settings. Elders are eligible to be elected to the office of bishop.

(Change)

¶ 410. ORDINATION AS ELDER.

1. Deacons who desire to be ordained as an elder shall declare their candidacy for such ordination to the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. They shall be eligible for ordination as elder once they:
 - a. Prove themselves faithful, mature, and effective over a period of a minimum of two years' service as a deacon;
 - b. Complete the educational requirements for ordination as an elder specified in ¶ 407.4a.
 - c. Pass an advanced level examination in doctrine, history, discipline and Bible;
 - d. Be interviewed and recommended by a two-thirds vote of the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent for ordination as an elder. In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church. The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church; and

-
- e. Be approved by two-thirds vote by the elders of the annual conference in executive session and be approved by the bishop.
2. The additional educational requirements specified in ¶ 407.4b must be completed within seven (7) years of ordination as elder. Persons who do not complete such requirements in a timely manner shall be ineligible thereafter to serve in the office of pastor of a local church but may continue to serve in other capacities as a deacon.
3. Elders are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters. ~~An elder not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall not have voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418.~~ Elders may be appointed by the bishop as a presiding elder (district superintendent), to local ministry as pastor in charge, to the staff of a local church, as a chaplain, as an evangelist, or to other ministry settings. Elders are eligible to be elected to the office of bishop.

PARAGRAPH	419
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	THEDDEUS (TJ) KIM - ANAHEIM, CA
ORGANIZATION	KOREAN - AMERICAN
RATIONALE	Some GMC clergy may serve a congregation in an annual conference that is different from their own annual conference, and some GMC clergy may serve as a chaplain who lives in another annual conference that is different from their own annual conference, and some GMC clergy belong to a special Annual Conference such as the Korean American Annual Conference established by paragraph 610, may want to have some relationship with the annual conference where they are geographically located.

Whereas clergy members in the Global Methodist Church have their memberships in the annual conference they belong to, and

Whereas clergy from other denominations who do not have any formal membership in any annual conferences of the Global Methodist Church may serve a local Global Methodist Church through the provision of paragraph 353 Ecumenical Congregations, and

Whereas some GMC clergy may also serve a congregation in an annual conference that is different from their own annual conference, and

Whereas some GMC clergy may also serve as a chaplain who lives in another annual conference that is different from their own annual conference, and

Whereas some GMC clergy, who belong to a special Annual Conference such as the Korean American Annual Conference established by paragraph 610, may want to have some relationship with the annual conference where they are geographically located, and

Whereas some GMC clergy, especially those in cross-racial or cross-cultural ministry appointments, may also benefit from a relationship with a special Annual Conference such as the Korean American Annual Conference; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Global Methodist Church shall add a paragraph after paragraph 418 Senior Status, titled AFFILIATE CLERGY MEMBERSHIP, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the new paragraph shall state:

1. Clergy persons from other denominations who are serving at an ecumenical congregation that has a covenanting relationship with the Global Methodist Church as prescribed in paragraph 353 may be granted affiliate membership in the annual conference that the covenanting congregation belongs to.
2. Clergy persons who are serving in an annual conference that is different from their own annual conference may be granted as an affiliate clergy membership in the conference where they are appointed to serve, while maintaining full membership in their original annual conference.
3. Clergy members who belong to a special annual conference may be granted affiliate membership in a local annual conference where their appointments are located.
4. Clergy members, especially those in cross-racial or cross-cultural appointments, may be granted affiliate clergy membership in a special annual conference.
5. Affiliate clergy members may not participate in the clergy session of the annual conference to which they are affiliate members but may participate in other meetings with voice only.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the numbering of the paragraphs will be adjusted after this addition.

PARAGRAPH 354

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER KEIHWAN RYOO - ANAHEIM, CA

ORGANIZATION KOREAN - AMERICAN

RATIONALE Some GMC clergy may serve a congregation in an annual conference that is different from their own annual conference, and some GMC clergy may serve as a chaplain who lives in another annual conference that is different from their own annual conference, and some GMC clergy belong to a special Annual Conference such as the Korean American Annual Conference established by paragraph 610, may want to have some relationship with the annual conference where they are geographically located.

Whereas most churches in the Global Methodist Church have their membership in geographically assigned annual conferences, and

Whereas some churches in the Global Methodist Church belong to a special annual conference that is not geographically bound, as allowed in paragraph 610, and

Whereas a mutually supportive relationship between the churches belonging to a special annual conference and their local annual conferences can be beneficial to both, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Global Methodist Church shall add a paragraph after paragraph 353, ECCUMENICAL CONGREGATIONS, titled AFFILIATE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the new paragraph shall state:

1. Churches in a special annual conference may request, in writing, affiliate church membership to the annual conference where they are geographically located.
2. After the approval of the cabinet and the session of the annual conference, the church shall report their affiliate status to its special annual conference for the approval.
3. The clergy and lay representatives of the affiliate member churches may participate in their affiliated annual conference with voice only.
4. Affiliated member churches are not obligated to give their connectional giving to their affiliated annual conferences.

5. Other churches in geographically bound annual conferences may become affiliated church members of a special conference under the same conditions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the numbering of the ensuing paragraphs will be adjusted after this addition.

PETITION 263

ENDING BLOCK VOTING

PARAGRAPH 410.1.d

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER REV. ROBERT BARNES - SAN ANTONIO, TX

ORGANIZATION MIDTEXAS CONFERENCE

RATIONALE Both boards of ministry and clergy sessions have essential responsibilities in reviewing and approving candidates for the ordained ministry. In recent years, many conferences in our predecessor denomination and in the GMC have adopted the practice of voting on candidates for ordination in a block, rather than individually. For the sake of meaningful accountability and the integrity of the clergy session, we should end this practice now.

AMEND Par. 410.1.d as follows (appears as 410.d in the TBOD but that is probably a typo)

- d. Be interviewed and recommended, individually, by a two-thirds vote of the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent for ordination as an elder. In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church. The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church; and

PETITION 264

ENDING BLOCK VOTING

PARAGRAPH 410.1.e

COMMITTEE MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH

SUBMITTER REV. ROBERT BARNES - SAN ANTONIO, TX

ORGANIZATION MIDTEXAS CONFERENCE

RATIONALE Both boards of ministry and clergy sessions have essential responsibilities in reviewing and approving candidates for the ordained ministry. In recent years, many conferences in our predecessor denomination and in the GMC have adopted the practice of voting on candidates for ordination in a block, rather than individually. For the sake of meaningful accountability and the integrity of the clergy session, we should end this practice now.

AMEND Par. 410.1.e as follows (appears as 410.e in the TBOD but that is probably a typo)

- e. Be approved, individually, by two-thirds vote by the elders of the annual conference in executive session and be approved by the bishop.

PETITION 270

THE CELEBRATION OF HOLY MARRIAGE PETITION 808.1.g

PARAGRAPH 808.1.g

COMMITTEE JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

SUBMITTER REV. STEWART KOUBA - ATLANTA, TX

ORGANIZATION TRINITY CONFERENCE

RATIONALE First, the petition strikes unnecessary qualifiers on the description of marriage. Second, the petition adds the act of homosexuality as a chargeable offense. What we mean by "act of homosexuality" when read in context clearly refers to sexual activity. This is to clarify the distinction of sinful practice from self- conception. As stated in 202.8, we do not seek to degrade anyone, but a clear statement on the unacceptability of such practice for clergy and bishops is appropriate.

808. JUDICIAL COMPLAINTS.

- g. Engaging in sexual activities outside the bonds of a ~~loving~~ and monogamous marriage between one man and one woman, including but not limited to sexual abuse or misconduct, ~~the~~ use or possession of pornography, act of homosexuality, or infidelity.

Rationale: As stated, a judicial complaint involves allegations of misconduct. First, the petition strikes unnecessary qualifiers on the description of marriage. Second, the petition adds the act of homosexuality as a chargeable offense. What we mean by *act of homosexuality* when read in context clearly refers to sexual activity. This is to clarify the distinction of sinful practice from self-conception. As stated elsewhere in 202.8, we are not seeking to degrade anyone, but a clear statement on the unacceptability of such practice for clergy and bishops is necessary and appropriate.

PETITION 271

DRAFT NEW ARTICLES OF FAITH FOR THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

PARAGRAPH	RESOLUTION
COMMITTEE	CONSTITUTION
SUBMITTER	DAYBREAK CHURCH COUNCIL - WILLIAMSBURG, VA (USA)
ORGANIZATION	VIRGINIA CONFERENCE
RATIONALE	It was expedient for the TBDD to include The Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church and The Confessions of Faith of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Now there is time to put both churches behind us and take ownership of a single document that captures the essential elements of both works. The new Articles of Faith should be written for modern people and should not criticize the practices of other churches.

We petition the General Conference to empower the Council of Bishops to form a task force of Wesleyan scholars to draft a new Articles of Faith for the Global Methodist Church. The Articles of Faith should be written for twenty-first century people and should not criticize the practices of other Christian churches. The new Articles of Faith should be presented to the next General Conference for review and approval. If approved, the new Articles of Faith should replace existing paragraphs: 106, 106.1 and 106.2 and be numbered 106.

PETITION 272

SPECIFYING GLOBAL HISTORY & POLITY

PARAGRAPH	407.3.a
COMMITTEE	MINISTRY & LOCAL CHURCH
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL COMMISSION ON MINISTRY
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	Among the educational requirements for a deacon is a course currently listed as "Denominational History and Polity." This wording would allow for individuals taking classes in the history and polity of other denominations, including the polity of the United Methodist Church. The proposal is to clarify that the intended course is in "Methodist History and the Polity of the Global Methodist Church."

PETITION REGARDING 407.3a

Specifying Global History and Polity

3. *Deacons Educational Requirements* — A total of ten courses (30 credit hours) are required for those ordained as deacons.
- a. Courses in the following five areas are required for all persons seeking ordination as a deacon:
- Introduction to the Old Testament
 - Introduction to the New Testament
 - Christian Leadership/Conflict Resolution
 - Methodist Theology
 - ~~Denominational History and Polity~~ Methodist History and Polity of the Global Methodist Church

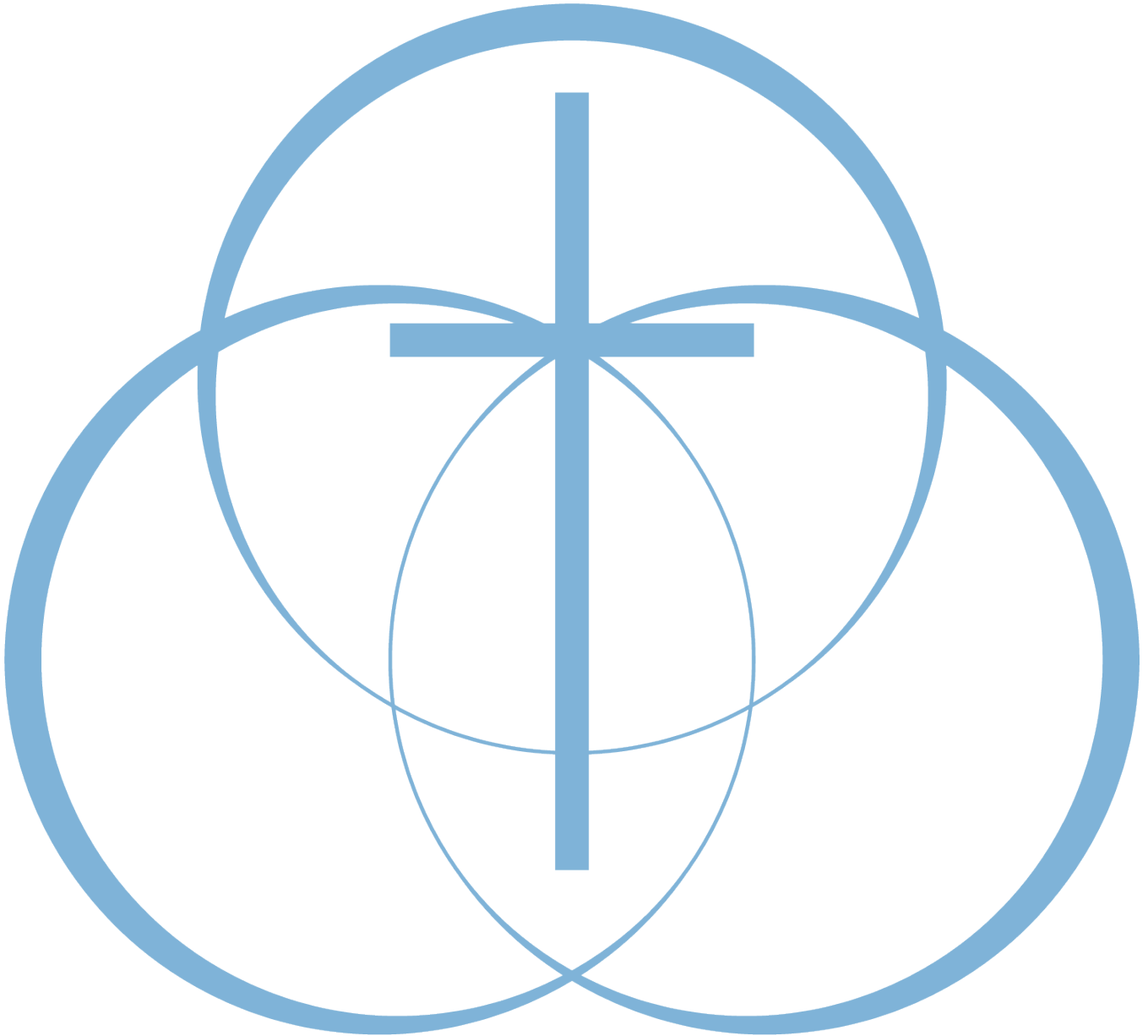
In addition, those pastoring a church, or planning to pursue elder's orders shall be required to complete a course in

- Basics of Preaching

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PETITION 110
RESOLUTION ADOPTING
BOOK OF DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE
& JUDICIAL PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

PARAGRAPH	RESOLUTION
COMMITTEE	PLENARY
SUBMITTER	TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
ORGANIZATION	GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH
RATIONALE	This resolution will be presented during the opening plenary session so that the convening General Conference can adopt what has been the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline, and the Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules during the transitional period as the Book of Doctrines and Discipline, and the Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules for the Global Methodist Church going forward. The resolution is to be immediately effective and it is this document that the delegates will be amend.

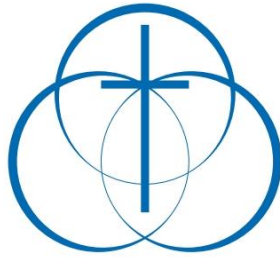
RESOLUTION FOR ADOPTION OF *BOOK OF DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE*

AND THE *JUDICIAL PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE RULES OF THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH*

BE IT RESOLVED that the attached *Book of Doctrines and Discipline of the Global Methodist Church* and the attached *Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules of the Global Methodist Church* be adopted by this convening General Conference and that its provisions be immediately effective.

**RESOLUTION FOR ADOPTION OF *BOOK OF DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE*
AND THE *JUDICIAL PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE RULES OF THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH***

BE IT RESOLVED that the attached *Book of Doctrines and Discipline of the Global Methodist Church* and the attached *Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules of the Global Methodist Church* be adopted by this convening General Conference and that its provisions be immediately effective.



GLOBAL
METHODIST CHURCH

**THE BOOK OF
DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE
THE GLOBAL METHODIST
CHURCH**

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PART ONE DOCTRINE

OUR HISTORICAL HERITAGE

¶ **101. OUR HERITAGE OF FAITH.** 1. Through the unsurpassing grace of God, the Global Methodist Church professes the revelation of God through the call of Abraham and the Hebrew people, culminating in the confession of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, the resurrected Lord of heaven and earth. This confession, expressed by Simon Peter in Matthew 16:16 and Acts 2:36, is foundational. It declares Jesus is the unique incarnate Word of God, and He lives today, calling all to receive Him as savior, and as the one to whom all authority has been given.

2. This faith has been tested and proved since its proclamation by the women at the empty tomb, Mary Magdalene among them, the first witnesses to the resurrection. It was taught by the apostles and defended by the women and men of the early church, many of whom gave their lives as testimony. Their labor, enabled and inspired by the Holy Spirit, resulted in the canon of scripture as the sufficient rule for both faith and practice (the Greek word *kanon* means rule). The church formulated creeds such as the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Chalcedonian definition as accurate expressions of this faith.

3. In the sixteenth century, the Protestant reformers preserved this testimony, asserting the primacy of Scripture, the necessity of grace and faith, the importance of justification by faith, and the priesthood of all believers. The doctrinal summation that stands behind the Methodist faith is the historic Thirty-Nine *Articles of Religion* of the Church of England which John Wesley reduced to the Twenty-Four Articles for the American church and which was affirmed at the Christmas Conference in 1784.

4. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Pietists in all traditions sought to emphasize the experiential nature of this faith, as a direct encounter with the risen Lord. They worked to develop the fruit of this faith, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in personal and communal life. These pietistic movements influenced many in the reformation traditions, including two Anglican brothers, John and Charles Wesley.

5. Through the labors of many Methodists in the British Isles, especially through the efforts of John and Charles Wesley, an organization and body of literature emerged, giving rise to a distinctly Methodist articulation of the Christian faith and life. To illustrate, Methodism placed particular emphasis on the universal work of grace, justification by faith, the new birth, and the fullness of salvation, otherwise known as entire sanctification or Christian perfection. Methodists created structures and communities alongside the established church to facilitate the mission "to reform the nation, particularly the church, and to spread scriptural holiness over the land."

6. As Methodists moved to America, they brought this expression of faith with them. Although Methodism in England remained loyal to the established church until after John Wesley's death, the American revolution led to the formation of a new church, independent of the Church of England. Accordingly, in 1784, while gathered in Baltimore for the "Christmas Conference," the Methodist Episcopal Church was formally constituted.

7. This new church adopted John Wesley's revision of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, the Methodist General Rules, a liturgy in the form of a revision of the Prayer Book, and it ordained Methodist clergy. Two other sources of authority were identified: the four volumes of sermons, which given Wesley's own publication of this body of literature at the time, included fifty-three

sermons, as well as his *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*. When a constitution was adopted in 1808, the Restrictive Rules protected the Articles and General Rules from revocation or change.

8. Other Methodist expressions of “primitive Christianity” and “the scripture way of salvation” emerged. German-speaking Americans from pietistic Reformed, Anabaptist, and Lutheran traditions, created organizations with doctrine and discipline nearly identical to the English-speaking Methodist Episcopal Church. The work of Phillip William Otterbein, Martin Boehm, and Jacob Albright established the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Association. A number of African American Methodists, including Richard Allen, and James Varick, helped to establish the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church to address racial discrimination and the injustices of slavery, while preserving doctrine and discipline. In the same century many Methodists participated in the Holiness Movement, an attempt to maintain Wesley’s emphasis on holiness of heart and life.

When the General Rules were officially adopted in 1789, a new rule was added in the American context that forbid participation in what John Wesley, himself, later referred to as “that execrable villainy, which is the scandal of religion,” namely, the institution of American slavery. However, due to the corrupting influences of American culture at the time, this rule was eventually ignored in those areas in which slavery was declared legal. By the time the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church met in 1844, American Methodism was already badly divided into pro and anti-slavery factions and a Plan of Separation was therefore adopted. Other tensions at the time included the respective powers of the episcopacy as well as those of the General Conference, due to the holding of slaves by clergy as well as by a prominent bishop. The following year, the Methodist Episcopal Church was rent asunder as delegates from the southern states met in Louisville, Kentucky, to organize the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. These two ecclesiastical bodies went their separate ways until the Uniting Conference of 1939 when they came together once more, along with the Methodist Protestant Church, which had organized earlier in 1830 along congregational lines. The uniting of these three bodies was simply known as The Methodist Church.

9. Through separations and mergers, Methodist Christians have preserved testimony to the risen and reigning Christ by holding themselves accountable to standards of doctrine and discipline. Consequently, Wesleyan doctrine spread to several countries in the Caribbean, Asia, Oceania, Africa, Latin America, and Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries primarily through the efforts of Methodist missionaries from the British Isles and North America. Powerful spiritual revivals often accompanied this expansion that further reinforced Wesleyan teachings on repentance, salvation by faith, the new birth, and holiness. When The United Methodist Church was formed in 1968, with the merger of The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren, both the Methodist *Articles of Religion* and the Evangelical United Brethren *Confession of Faith* were accepted as doctrinal standards and deemed “congruent” articulations of this faith. For fifty years, the growing voices from Africa, the Philippines, and Europe have joined in the engagement to maintain our doctrinal heritage, promoting fidelity to the doctrinal principles that launched our movement.

10. In the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the United Methodist Church was badly divided. As a consequence, the Global Methodist Church was launched by necessity on May 1, 2022, not only to preserve doctrinal integrity, especially in terms of the authority of Scripture, but also to provide a faithful and lively witness to the apostolic faith. Such a grounding ensured that the four historic marks of the Church, affirmed at the Second Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 381 AD, namely, that the church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, would mark the Global Methodist Church in an exemplary way.

OUR DOCTRINAL HERITAGE

¶ **102. THE WESLEYAN WAY OF SALVATION.** 1. The Wesleyan tradition celebrates the universal love of God in affirming that Christ died for all people with the result that the gift of salvation is available to all persons through the ministrations of the Holy Spirit. Our Father in Heaven is not willing that any should be lost (Matthew 18:14), but that all may come to “the knowledge of truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). With the Apostle Paul, we affirm the proclamation found in Romans 10:9, “That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

2. God’s love toward fallen creation is made manifest in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ; his life, ministry, death, and bodily resurrection. This gift of salvation is available to all humanity by grace through faith. Grace includes the active, empowering presence of God, through the Holy Spirit, enabling believers to trust, love, and serve God. This undeserved gift works to liberate humanity from both the guilt and power of sin, and to live as children of God, freed for joyful obedience. In the classic Wesleyan expression, grace works in numerous ways throughout our lives, beginning with the general providence of God toward all.

3. God’s *preventive or preventing grace* refers to “the first dawning of grace in the soul,” mitigating the effects of original sin, even before we are aware of our need for God. It prevents the full consequences of humanity’s alienation from God and awakens conscience, instills a basic knowledge of the moral law, gives an initial sense of God, and restores a measure of liberty to receive the further graces of God – all of this issuing in the first inclinations toward life. Received prior to our ability to respond, preventing grace enables genuine response to the continuing work of God’s grace.

4. God’s *convincing grace* leads us to what the Bible terms “repentance,” awakening in us a desire to “flee the wrath to come” and enabling us to begin to “fear God and work righteousness.” Clearly, repentance is at the heart of what Methodism has always been about: the calling of sinners to forsake their self-referential ways and to embrace the good news of Jesus Christ. Indeed, so important was repentance to John Wesley that he referred to it as one of the three main doctrines of Methodism, along with both faith and holiness. In fact, he even described repentance as “the porch of religion.”

5. God’s *justifying grace* is received by faith to reconcile us to God through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, what God does for us. It is pardon for past sins and ordinarily results in the direct assurance of “God’s Spirit witnessing with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:16) as well as the indirect witness of a good conscience in the midst of the fruit of the Spirit.

6. God’s *sanctifying grace* begins with God’s work of regeneration, sometimes referred to as “being born again,” or “initial sanctification.” It is God’s work in us as we continually turn to Him and seek to be perfected in His love. Sanctification is the process by which the Holy Spirit increasingly cleanses the heart in Christlikeness and to put to death the carnal nature in an ever increasing abundance of the fruit of the Spirit. With John Wesley, we believe that a life of holiness and ultimately “entire sanctification” should be the goal of each person’s journey with God.

7. Our ultimate hope and promise in Christ is glorification, where our souls and bodies will be perfectly restored to live with God eternally through the new creation.

¶ **103. PRINCIPLES OF OUR LIFE TOGETHER.** Wesley said, “there is no holiness but social.” By referring to “social holiness,” Wesley meant that the road to holiness was one that we could not travel by ourselves, but rather involved the community of faith at every step along the way.

Our longing and hope are that our church may:

1. Remain rooted and grounded in the scriptures and in the historic teachings of the Christian church as defined in our Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith, and understood through the Wesleyan lens of faith.

2. Aspire to introduce all people, without exception, to Jesus Christ, recognizing that the mission in which we are engaged has eternal consequences. We are committed to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus in Matthew 28 to go into all the world to make disciples of Christ, teaching and baptizing in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

3. Lead all those who experience the new birth in Jesus to deepen in the faith and to grow in their relationship with Him, receiving the Holy Spirit as evidenced by both spiritual fruit and gifts that are manifested in their lives to the glory of God. We encourage all to participate in discipleship and accountability groups, such as Wesleyan class and band meetings, and to utilize all the other means of grace to achieve this end.

4. Model the love of God in order to respond to the summons to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. To this end we are committed to fulfill the commandment in John 21 of lovingly feeding and tending to the flock of God and others, worshiping God in spirit, and in truth and watching over one another in love. This the church does until, perfected in love, it experiences the fullness of God's restored Kingdom with Christ.

5. Recognize the laity as the people of God and a royal priesthood, chosen and empowered for the work of God in this world in full partnership with our clergy. We affirm the participation and leadership of those of all races, ethnicities, nationalities, sexes, and ages in the Body of Christ.

6. Encourage and affirm the call of God in the lives of clergy who are grounded in the authoritative witness of the Scriptures, set apart by the church, and recognized to possess the necessary gifts and graces for ministry in alignment and accountability with our settled doctrines and discipline.

7. Display a "catholic spirit" to the church universal, cherishing our place within the greater Body of Christ through mutual respect, cooperative relationships, and shared mission with others wherever possible. We envision a global church in which all work together, resourcing and learning from one another, to fulfill the tasks of the church given to it by God.

8. Provide an organization and structure that is able to accomplish its primary functions of support, with a connectional polity that can empower and multiply the gifts of all for the sake of Christ's work in the world.

¶ **104. HOLY SCRIPTURE.** The canonical books of the Old and New Testaments (as specified in the Articles of Religion) are the primary rule and authority for faith, morals, and service, against which all other authorities must be measured.

¶ **105. NORMATIVE DOCUMENTS FOR OUR DOCTRINAL STANDARDS.** The following summaries of the apostolic witness disclosed in Scripture have been affirmed by many Christian communities, and express orthodox Christian teaching. The word "normative" refers to the standards by which we judge true and false teaching. Normative teaching is binding and obligatory. It establishes the proper boundaries for preaching and teaching in our denomination. The Apostles' Creed has been employed by the church throughout her rich history for doctrinal clarity and for the lively confession of faith in preparation for the sacrament of baptism. The Nicene

Creed,¹ which expresses the belief of the catholic, universal church, is crucial for both catechesis and for the proper interpretation of Scripture. It is regularly professed within the context of worship globally.

1. THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the Virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 He descended to the dead.
 On the third day He rose again;
 He ascended into heaven,
 Is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic* church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body
 and the life everlasting. Amen.
 * universal

2. THE NICENE CREED (A.D. 381)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from
true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through Him all things
were made. For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven, was incarnate
of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.
For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

¹ The Nicene Creed (381) is a normative doctrinal standard for the Global Methodist Church. Churches in the East and West, however, have long disagreed over the addition of the word *filioque*, a Latin word that means “and the Son.” The original Creed (381) expressed the idea that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father. Churches in the Latin West came to believe that the Spirit proceeds from the Father *and the Son*. Methodism is part of the Western tradition of Christian faith. Some churches, however, particularly in Eastern Europe, have adopted the Eastern version of the Creed. Therefore, the omission of “and the Son” is permissible within GMC congregations.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic* and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

* universal

ADDITIONAL DOUCTIONS FOR OUR DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

The following document, though important for proper teaching about Jesus Christ, does not enjoy the same broad acceptance as do both the Apostles' and the Nicene Creed. It is not employed, for example, by the Oriental Orthodox Churches comprising the Coptic, Armenian, Syrian, Ethiopian, Eritrean, and the Malankara Indian Churches. The Definition of Chalcedon, however, has been affirmed by Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy and by several Protestant theological traditions.

3. THE DEFINITION OF CHALCEDON (A.D. 451)

Following the holy fathers, we teach with one voice that the Son of God and our Lord Jesus Christ is to be confessed as one and the same Person,
That He is perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body consisting of one substance with the Father as regards His Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards His manhood, like us in all respects, apart from sin.

Begotten of His Father before the ages as regards His Godhead,
But in these last days born for us and for our salvation of the Virgin Mary, the God-bearer.

This one and the same Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
must be confessed to be in two natures, without confusion, without changes, without division, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and only-begotten God the Word, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of Him,
And our Lord Jesus Christ Himself taught us,
And the creed of the fathers has handed down to us.

¶ **106. NORMATIVE STANDARDS FOR WESLEYAN WITNESS.** As is the case in many Christian communities, we recognize additional statements of faith that are consistent with the creedal tradition of the church universal, but which also express our church's particular emphases and concerns, as well as our theological heritage of faith. These constitutive, normative standards embody the "faith once for all entrusted to the saints" (Jude 3) and serve as a bulwark against false teaching, providing the framework for the praise of God in our teaching (orthodoxy), the development of our collective theology, and the launching point for our living and service

(orthopraxis). Recognizing the complementary streams of the Methodist and the Evangelical United Brethren faith communities, both the Articles of Religion and the Confession of Faith define the doctrinal boundaries of our church, until such time as a combined Articles of Faith may be approved by the church.

1. THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION OF THE METHODIST CHURCH. Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England were ratified in their final form in 1571 during the reign of Elizabeth I. They reflect both the concerns of the English Reformation and the comprehensive nature of the established church. As the United States emerged as an independent nation, Wesley revised the Articles in 1784 for the Methodist work in America. His twenty-four Articles reflect both his theological commitments and his desire for doctrinal clarity, shortening some articles and deleting others if they could be easily misread. The Methodist Episcopal Church added an additional article dealing with the duty of Christians to civil authority. The twenty-five Articles were officially adopted by the General Conference of 1808, when the first Restrictive Rule was also implemented, and revised by the Uniting Conference of 1939 when three Methodist communions within America became one. The Twenty-Five Articles are as follows:

Article I - Of Faith in the Holy Trinity

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and good; the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Article II - Of the Word, or Son of God, Who Was Made Very Man

The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided; whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile us to His Father, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men.

Article III - Of the Resurrection of Christ

Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

Article IV - Of the Holy Ghost

The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

Article V - Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation

The Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testaments of whose authority was never any doubt in the church. The names of the canonical books are:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, The First Book of Samuel, The Second Book of Samuel, The First Book of Kings, The Second Book of Kings,

The First Book of Chronicles, The Second Book of Chronicles, The Book of Ezra, The Book of Nehemiah, The Book of Esther, The Book of Job, The Psalms, The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes or the Preacher, Cantica or Songs of Solomon, Four Prophets the Greater, Twelve Prophets the Less.

All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.

Article VI - Of the Old Testament

The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testaments everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses as touching ceremonies and rites doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.

Article VII - Of Original or Birth Sin

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

Article VIII - Of Free Will

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

Article IX - Of the Justification of Man

We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith, only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

Article X - Of Good Works

Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

Article XI - Of Works of Supererogation

Voluntary works—besides, over and above God's commandments—which they call works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required; whereas Christ saith plainly: When you have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

Article XII - Of Sin After Justification

Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification. After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and, by the grace of God, rise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here; or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

Article XIII - Of the Church

The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

Article XIV - Of Purgatory

The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardon, worshiping, and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but repugnant to the Word of God.

Article XV - Of Speaking in the Congregation in Such a Tongue as the People Understand

It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the primitive church, to have public prayer in the church, or to minister the Sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people.

Article XVI - Of the Sacraments

Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will toward us, by which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm, our faith in him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called sacraments, that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel; being such as have partly grown out of the corrupt following of the apostles, and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation; but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith.

Article XVII - Of Baptism

Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. The Baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church.

Article XVIII - Of the Lord's Supper

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped.

Article XIX - Of Both Kinds

The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people; for both the parts of the Lord's Supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike.

Article XX - Of the One Oblation of Christ, Finished upon the Cross

The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit.

Article XXI - Of the Marriage of Ministers

The ministers of Christ are not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.

Article XXII - Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches

It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the Word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the church, and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.

Article XXIII - Of the Rulers of the United States of America

The President, the Congress, the general assemblies, the governors, and the councils of state, as the delegates of the people, are the rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United States and by the constitutions of their respective states. And the said states are a sovereign and independent nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

Article XXIV - Of Christian Men's Goods

The riches and goods of Christians are not common as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

Article XXV - Of a Christian Man's Oath

As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James his apostle, so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.

The following Article from the *Methodist Protestant Discipline* was placed here by the Uniting Conference (1939). It was not one of the Articles of Religion voted upon by the three churches.]

Of Sanctification (*from the Methodist Protestant Discipline*)

Sanctification is that renewal of our fallen nature by the Holy Ghost, received through faith in Jesus Christ, whose blood of atonement cleanseth all from sin; whereby we are not only delivered from the guilt of sin, but are washed from its pollution, saved from its power, and enabled, through grace, to love God with all our hearts and to walk in His holy commandments blameless.

[The following provision was adopted by the Uniting Conference (1939).

Of the Duty of Christians to the Civil Authority

It is the duty of all Christians, and especially of all Christian ministers, to observe and obey the laws and commands of the governing or supreme authority of the country of which are citizens or subjects or in which they reside, and to use all laudable means to encourage and enjoin obedience to the powers that be.

2. THE CONFESSION OF FAITH OF THE EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH. The Confession of Faith of the Evangelical United Brethren Church traces its roots from the doctrinal developments of the Evangelical Association and the United Brethren in Christ traditions. In 1809, two years after the death of Jacob Albright, the Evangelical Association adopted a German translation of the Methodist Episcopal Church's Articles of Religion with the addition of an article on the last judgement from the Lutheran Augsburg Confession of 1530 and an essay on Christian perfection by George Miller. These were reduced to twenty-one in 1816, omitting polemical articles against Roman Catholics and Anabaptists. These were later condensed to nineteen, the number of articles maintained by the Evangelical Church when it was formed in 1923. In 1815, the first general conference of the United Brethren in Christ adopted a Confession of Faith with seven articles. A more comprehensive Confession of Faith was composed

in 1889, with thirteen articles, including an article on sanctification. In 1946, when the Evangelical United Brethren Church was formed, it retained both the Confession of Faith of the United Brethren in Christ and the Articles of Faith of the Evangelical Church. In 1962, a new Confession of Faith was completed containing sixteen articles. This was adopted in the 1968 merger with the Methodist Church that resulted in the United Methodist Church. The sixteen articles are as follows:

Article I - God

We believe in the one true, holy and living God, Eternal Spirit, who is Creator, Sovereign and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. He is infinite in power, wisdom, justice, goodness and love, and rules with gracious regard for the well-being and salvation of men, to the glory of his name. We believe the one God reveals himself as the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, distinct but inseparable, eternally one in essence and power.

Article II - Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man, in whom the divine and human natures are perfectly and inseparably united. He is the eternal Word made flesh, the only begotten Son of the Father, born of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. As ministering Servant he lived, suffered and died on the cross. He was buried, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven to be with the Father, from whence he shall return. He is eternal Savior and Mediator, who intercedes for us, and by him all men will be judged.

Article III - The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from and is one in being with the Father and the Son. He convinces the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He leads men through faithful response to the gospel into the fellowship of the Church. He comforts, sustains and empowers the faithful and guides them into all truth.

Article IV - The Holy Bible

We believe the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, reveals the Word of God so far as it is necessary for our salvation. It is to be received through the Holy Spirit as the true rule and guide for faith and practice. Whatever is not revealed in or established by the Holy Scriptures is not to be made an article of faith nor is it to be taught as essential to salvation.

Article V - The Church

We believe the Christian Church is the community of all true believers under the Lordship of Christ. We believe it is one, holy, apostolic and catholic. It is the redemptive fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by men divinely called, and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit the Church exists for the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers and the redemption of the world.

Article VI - The Sacraments

We believe the Sacraments, ordained by Christ, are symbols and pledges of the Christian's profession and of God's love toward us. They are means of grace by which God works invisibly in us, quickening, strengthening and confirming our faith in him. Two Sacraments are ordained by Christ our Lord, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

We believe Baptism signifies entrance into the household of faith, and is a symbol of repentance and inner cleansing from sin, a representation of the new birth in Christ Jesus and a mark of Christian discipleship.

We believe children are under the atonement of Christ and as heirs of the Kingdom of God are acceptable subjects for Christian Baptism. Children of believing parents through Baptism become the special responsibility of the Church. They should be nurtured and led to personal acceptance of Christ, and by profession of faith confirm their Baptism.

We believe the Lord's Supper is a representation of our redemption, a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ, and a token of love and union which Christians have with Christ and with one another. Those who rightly, worthily and in faith eat the broken bread and drink the blessed cup partake of the body and blood of Christ in a spiritual manner until he comes.

Article VII - Sin and Free Will

We believe man is fallen from righteousness and, apart from the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, is destitute of holiness and inclined to evil. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. In his own strength, without divine grace, man cannot do good works pleasing and acceptable to God. We believe, however, man influenced and empowered by the Holy Spirit is responsible in freedom to exercise his will for good.

Article VIII - Reconciliation Through Christ

We believe God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. The offering Christ freely made on the cross is the perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, redeeming man from all sin, so that no other satisfaction is required.

Article IX - Justification and Regeneration

We believe we are never accounted righteous before God through our works or merit, but that penitent sinners are justified or accounted righteous before God only by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe regeneration is the renewal of man in righteousness through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature and experience newness of life. By this new birth the believer becomes reconciled to God and is enabled to serve him with the will and the affections. We believe, although we have experienced regeneration, it is possible to depart from grace and fall into sin; and we may even then, by the grace of God, be renewed in righteousness.

Article X - Good Works

We believe good works are the necessary fruits of faith and follow regeneration but they do not have the virtue to remove our sins or to avert divine judgment. We believe good works, pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, spring from a true and living faith, for through and by them faith is made evident.

Article XI - Sanctification and Christian Perfection

We believe sanctification is the work of God's grace through the Word and the Spirit, by which those who have been born again are cleansed from sin in their thoughts, words and acts, and are enabled to live in accordance with God's will, and to strive for holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

Entire sanctification is a state of perfect love, righteousness and true holiness which every regenerate believer may obtain by being delivered from the power of sin, by loving God with all the heart, soul, mind and strength, and by loving one's neighbor as one's self. Through faith in Jesus Christ this

gracious gift may be received in this life both gradually and instantaneously, and should be sought earnestly by every child of God.

We believe this experience does not deliver us from the infirmities, ignorance, and mistakes common to man, nor from the possibilities of further sin. The Christian must continue on guard against spiritual pride and seek to gain victory over every temptation to sin. He must respond wholly to the will of God so that sin will lose its power over him; and the world, the flesh, and the devil are put under his feet. Thus he rules over these enemies with watchfulness through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Article XII - The Judgment and the Future State

We believe all men stand under the righteous judgment of Jesus Christ, both now and in the last day. We believe in the resurrection of the dead; the righteous to life eternal and the wicked to endless condemnation.

Article XIII - Public Worship

We believe divine worship is the duty and privilege of man who, in the presence of God, bows in adoration, humility and dedication. We believe divine worship is essential to the life of the Church, and that the assembling of the people of God for such worship is necessary to Christian fellowship and spiritual growth.

We believe the order of public worship need not be the same in all places but may be modified by the church according to circumstances and the needs of men. It should be in a language and form understood by the people, consistent with the Holy Scriptures to the edification of all, and in accordance with the order and *Discipline* of the Church.

Article XIV - The Lord's Day

We believe the Lord's Day is divinely ordained for private and public worship, for rest from unnecessary work, and should be devoted to spiritual improvement, Christian fellowship and service. It is commemorative of our Lord's resurrection and is an emblem of our eternal rest. It is essential to the permanence and growth of the Christian Church, and important to the welfare of the civil community.

Article XV - The Christian and Property

We believe God is the owner of all things and that the individual holding of property is lawful and is a sacred trust under God. Private property is to be used for the manifestation of Christian love and liberality, and to support the Church's mission in the world. All forms of property, whether private, corporate or public, are to be held in solemn trust and used responsibly for human good under the sovereignty of God.

Article XVI - Civil Government

We believe civil government derives its just powers from the sovereign God. As Christians we recognize the governments under whose protection we reside and believe such governments should be based on, and be responsible for, the recognition of human rights under God. We believe war and bloodshed are contrary to the gospel and spirit of Christ. We believe it is the duty of Christian citizens to give moral strength and purpose to their respective governments through sober, righteous and godly living.

¶ 107. FOUNDATIONAL WESLEYAN STANDARDS FOR CHRISTIAN

DISCIPLESHIP. Representing the normative contributions and emphases of Methodism’s articulation of the Christian faith, the Wesleyan Standards have, to one degree or another, been broadly shared between the spiritual descendants of the eighteenth-century evangelical renewal led by John and Charles Wesley. These standards teach us what it means to be Methodist and the teachings of our communities should be consistent with them. These include the following:

1. ***THE STANDARD SERMONS OF JOHN WESLEY*** Intended to provide patterns of preaching and teaching for the people called Methodists, John Wesley published several editions of his sermons, beginning in 1746, to set down what he found as “the way to heaven, with a view to distinguish this way of God from all those which are the inventions of men.” The compilation of forty-four of those sermons were intended to provide a “model deed,” promulgated in 1763, for what was preached from a Methodist pulpit in the ongoing life of the church. These particular sermons were regarded by Wesley as being of distinct value, and intended to serve as “standards” for teaching Christian doctrine in the church:

1. *Salvation by Faith*
2. *The Almost Christian*
3. *Awake, Thou That Sleepest*
4. *Scriptural Christianity*
5. *Justification By Faith*
6. *The Righteousness of Faith*
7. *The Way to the Kingdom*
8. *The First-Fruits of the Spirit*
9. *The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption*
10. *The Witness of the Spirit - Discourse I*
11. *The Witness of our own Spirit*
12. *The Means of Grace*
13. *The Circumcision of the Heart*
14. *The Marks of the New Birth*
15. *The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God*
- 16-28. *Upon our Lord's Sermon on the Mount (13 Discourses)*
29. *The Original, Nature, Property and Use of the Law*
30. *The Law Established through Faith Discourse One*
31. *The Law Established through Faith Discourse Two*
32. *The Nature of Enthusiasm*
33. *A Caution against Bigotry*
34. *Catholic Spirit*
35. *Christian Perfection*
36. *Wondering Thoughts*
37. *Satan's Devices*
38. *Original Sin*
39. *The New Birth*
40. *The Wilderness State*
41. *Heaviness through Manifold Temptations*
42. *Self-Denial*
43. *The Cure of Evil Speaking*
44. *The Use of Money*

The 1771 edition of Wesley's *Works* included nine additional sermons which helped to clarify the difference between the new birth and entire sanctification (the sermons *On Sin in Believers* and *The Repentance of Believers*) as well as to offer a very helpful summation of John Wesley's practical theology (*The Scripture Way of Salvation*):

- 45. *The Witness of the Spirit, II*
- 46. *On Sin in Believers*
- 47. *The Repentance of Believers*
- 48. *The Great Assize*
- 49. *The Lord Our Righteousness*
- 50. *The Scripture Way of Salvation*
- 51. *The Good Steward*
- 52. *The Reformation of Manners*
- 53. *On the Death of George Whitefield*

In addition to the forty-four, these nine sermons were known and beloved by American Methodists, since Wesley's four volumes of sermons, published in 1771, contained them all. These same sermons were therefore likely in mind when the Christmas Conference met in 1784 and adopted standards of doctrine for the American church. Later, the 1787-88 edition of Wesley's sermons reverted back to the forty-four, in keeping with the stipulations of the model deed. Nevertheless, the fifty-three sermons continued to be known and widely read due to their publishing history in North America, a history that helped to establish a distinct and revered tradition in terms of actual Methodist practice. Remarkably enough, when the historic Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church met in 1808, it refused to entertain the question of Francis Ward as to just what sermons constitute "our present and existing standards of doctrine?" At any rate, the additional nine sermons, affirmed by Wesley in 1771, supplemented the original forty-four, providing additional teaching on matters of practical divinity and other topics, leading to greater clarity and, as a consequence, significant illuminating power in the Christian life.

2. THE EXPLANATORY NOTES UPON THE NEW TESTAMENT. First published in 1755, John Wesley's New Testament text is based upon the King James Version and Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. The notes were aimed at the average reader and provide historical context for and Wesleyan theological interpretation of the Scriptures, drawing upon work of four earlier commentaries.

¶ **108. THE GENERAL RULES OF THE UNITED SOCIETIES.** In order to make explicit the expectations upon those who are members of the Methodist societies, John Wesley first devised a set of rules in 1738, publishing it five years later. The General Rules were subsequently adopted by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1785, one year after its formation. The General Rules provide a helpful summation of the kind of intentional discipleship which marked early Methodism, summed up in three simple rubrics: do no harm, do good to all, and stay connected to the sacramental and devotional life of the church. The Rules thus remain a part of the Constitution and are protected by the Restrictive Rules.

The Nature, Design, and General Rules of Our United Societies

"In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley, in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They

desired, as did two or three more the next day, that he would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together, which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on Thursday in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily), he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them, and they always concluded their meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities.

This was the rise of the **United Society**, first in Europe, and then in America. Such a society is no other than ‘a company of men having the *form* and seeking the *power* of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.’

That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called **classes**, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class, one of whom is styled the **leader**. It is his duty:

1. To see each person in his class once a week at least, in order: (1) to inquire how their souls prosper; (2) to advise, reprove, comfort or exhort, as occasion may require; (3) to receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the preachers, church, and poor.
2. To meet the ministers and the stewards of the society once a week, in order: (1) to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly and will not be reproved; (2) to pay the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding. There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies: ‘a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins.’ But wherever this is really fixed in the soul it will be shown by its fruits.

It is therefore expected of all who continue therein that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First: By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced, such as:

The taking of the name of God in vain.

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein or by buying or selling.

Drunkenness: buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.

Slaveholding: buying or selling slaves.

Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing;

the using many words in buying or selling.

The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.

The giving or taking things on usury—i.e., unlawful interest.

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as:

The putting on of gold and costly apparel.

The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.
The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.
Softness and needless self-indulgence.
Laying up treasure upon earth.
Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

It is expected of all who continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly: By doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men:

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine that ‘we are not to do good unless *our hearts be free to it.*’

By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another, helping each other in business, and so much the more because the world will love its own and them only.

By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them *falsely*, for the Lord’s sake.

It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly: By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are:

The public worship of God.

The ministry of the Word, either read or expounded.

The Supper of the Lord.

Family and private prayer.

Searching the Scriptures.

Fasting or abstinence.

These are the General Rules of our societies; all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written Word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.”

¶ **109. THE RESTRICTIVE RULE.** In continuity with our Wesleyan heritage, the governing body of the Global Methodist Church shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion or Confession of Faith, or establish any new standards of rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine.

PART TWO

SOCIAL WITNESS

¶ **201. OUR SOCIAL HERITAGE** 1. Following both the example and teachings of Jesus, we believe that God calls us to love and serve others around the world in His name. Since God first stirred the hearts of John and Charles Wesley to feed the hungry, visit those in prison, oppose slavery, and care for those less fortunate, Methodists have believed in meeting people at their point of need and offering them Jesus. We are convinced that faith if it is not accompanied by action is dead (James 2:17) and that, as Jesus reminded us, when we do not do what is needed to care for the least of our sisters and brothers, we likewise have not done so for Christ either (Matthew 25:45).

2. It was in that spirit that the Methodist Episcopal Church became the first denomination in the world to adopt a formal Social Creed in 1908, spurred by the Social Gospel in response to the deplorable working conditions of millions. Though reflective of its own time, the statement is still remarkably relevant even today, calling for, among other things, “equal rights and complete justice for all men in all stations of life, principles of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions, abolition of child labor, the suppression of the ‘sweating system,’ a reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practical point, a release from employment one day in seven, and for a living wage in every industry.” In turn, that prophetic witness was subsequently embraced by each of the other branches of Methodism and the Evangelical United Brethren Church and continues this day within the Global Methodist Church. As a global church, our Social Witness represents a consensus vision transcending cultures of what it means to be faithful disciples in a world that remains in rebellion against its Creator, wracked by violence and unfettered greed. It is a summons to prayerfully consider how to “do good” and “do no harm” to all as we put our faith into practice.

¶ **202. OUR WITNESS TO THE WORLD.**

1. We believe that all persons irrespective of their station or circumstances in life have been made in the image of God and must be treated with dignity, justice, and respect. We denounce as sin racism, sexism, and other expressions that unjustly discriminate against any person (*Genesis 1-2, Deuteronomy 16:19-20, Luke 11:42, 19:9, Colossians 3:11*).

2. We believe that life is a holy gift of God whose beginnings and endings are set by God, and that it is the particular duty of believers to protect those who may be powerless to protect themselves, including the unborn, those with disabilities or serious illness, and the aged (*Genesis 2:7, Leviticus 19:32, Jeremiah 1:5, Luke 1:41-44*).

3. The sacredness of all life compels us to resist the practice of abortion except in the cases of tragic conflicts of life against life when the wellbeing of the mother and the child are at stake. We do not accept abortion as a means of birth control or gender selection, and we call upon all Christians as disciples of the Lord of Life to prayerfully consider how we can support those women facing unintended pregnancies without adequate care, counsel, or resources (*Exodus 22:23-23, Psalm 139:13-16, James 1:27*).

4. We believe that all should have the right to work in safe conditions with fair compensation and free of grinding toil or exploitation by others. We respect the right of workers to engage in collective bargaining to protect their welfare. We pray that all should be allowed to freely follow their vocations, especially those who work on the frontiers of truth and knowledge and those who may enrich the lives of others with beauty and joy. We acknowledge that science and technology are gifts of God intended to improve human life and we encourage dialogue between faith and science as mutual witnesses to God’s creative power (*Deuteronomy 5:12-14, Luke 10:7, 1 Corinthians 10:31, 1 Timothy 5:18*).

5. We believe that God has called us to share His concern for the poor and to alleviate the conditions and policies which have produced vast disparities in wealth and resources, both among individuals and nations, giving rise to poverty. We are called to improve the quality of life and opportunities for all God's people as we share the good news to the poor and freedom for the oppressed (*Leviticus 19:9-10, Matthew 25:37-40, Luke 6:20-25, James 2:1-5*).

6. We believe that all have been summoned to care for the earth as our common home, stewarding its resources, sharing in its bounty, and exercising responsible and sustainable consumption so that there is enough for all (*Genesis 2:15, Leviticus 26:34-35, Psalm 24:1*).

7. We believe that human sexuality is a gift of God that is to be affirmed as it is exercised within the legal and spiritual covenant of a loving and monogamous marriage between one man and one woman (*Exodus 20:14, Matthew 19:3-9, Ephesians 5:22-33*).

8. We are saddened by all expressions of sexual behavior, including pornography, polygamy, and promiscuity, that do not recognize the sacred worth of each individual or that seek to exploit, abuse, objectify, or degrade others, or that represent less than God's intentional design for His children. While affirming a scriptural view of sexuality and gender, we welcome all to experience the redemptive grace of Jesus and are committed to being a safe place of refuge, hospitality, and healing for any who may have experienced brokenness in their sexual lives (*Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:24, 1 Corinthians 6:9-20*).

9. We believe that children, whether through birth or adoption, are a sacred gift to us from God, and we accept our responsibility to both protect and nurture the youngest among us, particularly against such abuses as enforced child labor, involuntary conscription, human trafficking, and other such practices in the world (*Deuteronomy 4:9-10, Psalm 127:3-5, 1 Timothy 5:4,8,16*).

10. We believe that followers of God have been called to exercise self-control and holiness in their personal lives, generosity and kindness in their relations with others, and grace in all matters of life (*Romans 12:9-21, Galatians 5:22-23*).

11. We believe in the rule of justice and law in society, in the right of individuals to follow God's call and to lawfully immigrate to new places, and in the pursuit of peace both between nations and individuals. We offer ourselves to work in order to reduce the bitterness that has overflowed in God's world (*Genesis 12:1, Isaiah 11:1-9, 2 Corinthians 13:11, Ephesians 2:19-10*).

12. We believe the practice of the Golden Rule, treating others as we would wish to be treated, can effectively guide our social and business relationships. We seek to cultivate the mind of Christ and a heart for others (*Matthew 7:12, Romans 12:1-2*).

13. We believe that each person should have the right to exercise their religious beliefs without fear of persecution and that governments should respect freedom of religion and the important role of faith communities within the greater society. We further denounce discrimination or persecution which may target any because of their gender, economic status, ethnic or tribal identity, age, or political views (*Isaiah 1:17, Matthew 5:44, Romans 8:35*).

14. We believe in the final triumph of righteousness when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of Christ, and we accept our calling to work towards that end as Christ's light and the salt of the earth (*Matthew 5:13-16, Revelation 11:15-17, Revelation 21-22*).

PART THREE

THE COMMUNITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Section I. Foundational Principles

¶ **301. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH.** The mission of the Global Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.

Anchored in our belief in Jesus Christ, the Church is of God and will be preserved to the end of time to worship God in spirit and in truth, to faithfully preach God's Word and offer the holy sacraments, to edify all who believe and encourage them to grow in their lives of holiness and service to others, to minister to those who are in special need, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, to present the world with a clear and compelling invitation to accept Jesus Christ as Lord. All those of every age and station stand in need of the grace that God has promised to extend to others through His Body, the Church. While it is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit to change the hearts of individuals, ours is the task of sharing the good news of God as we respond to the summons of Christ in Matthew 28: *"As you are going, make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you,"* even as Christ has promised to remain with us always, *"even to the end of the age."*

Following the example of early Methodists, we believe God has raised us up in order to "spread scriptural holiness across the land," embodying that "grand *depositum*" of the faith that John Wesley believed had been entrusted to "the people called Methodists," the continued striving for entire sanctification in our lives. As individual believers in Christ, and as those gathered together in local congregations, our calling is to connect with the communities and the world around us, extending both grace and mercy. Growing in our personal faith, and effectively discipling others, are both life-long expressions of loving the Lord with all of our hearts, all of our being, and all of our minds, as well as loving our neighbor as ourselves.

¶ **302. A GLOBAL CHURCH.** John Wesley famously declared in his journal on June 11, 1739, "I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation." Since that time Methodists have recognized that at the core of our church's mission is ensuring that the Good News of Jesus Christ is shared around the globe. From Britain, to the Americas, to the Caribbean, Europe, Africa, and Asia, the Methodists who came before us shared Jesus' message of salvation. Today our mission receives this rich inheritance and moves forward boldly into a new chapter. We recognize the world is the parish of the Global Methodist Church. We are active in advancing the cause of Christ on multiple continents, and our faith communities will continue to do so.

Ours is a global church that recognizes the gifts and contributions of each part of our communion in Christ, working together as partners in the gospel with equal voice and leadership. Learning from each other and sharing best practices across cultures, we follow the admonition of St. Paul that "to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good," that together we are the Body of Christ, sharing in "an equal concern for one another" (1 Corinthians 12). Our vision of a global church is one marked by mutual love, concern, sharing, and accountability.

¶ **303. OUR COVENANT IN CHRIST.** We believe that God has called us to live together in a faithful covenant that expresses our commitments both to God and to each other. With John Wesley, we affirm that the scriptures know of no such thing as "solitary religion," but that we have been designed to grow in our discipleship in the company of others. As a church, we are committed

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to a connectional organization that is meant to encourage such sharing and accountability, with the end goal of all being partners in the gospel and in our outreach to the world. This connection is founded in both our common doctrinal understandings, as well as in our core mission of sharing the gospel with the world. Towards that end, we celebrate our unity with one another at the table of the Lord that extends across the globe, crossing all boundaries of language, culture, customs, and social and economic distinctions.

¶ 304. THE MINISTRY OF THE LAITY. God has entrusted His work in this world to the whole people of God. All Christians are called through their baptism to be in ministry to others, both as individuals and as a part of the church, using the gifts and graces with which they have been equipped by the Holy Spirit. Every layperson bears the responsibility for carrying out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20), but likewise each have been given the power by God to do so. For like the variety of spiritual gifts described in the scriptures, the diversity of our outreach efforts knows no limit either when we serve Christ with joy and thanksgiving. With other heirs of the Protestant Reformation, we embrace the notion of "the priesthood of all believers" and we call upon both laity and clergy to work together in a partnership of servanthood. As suggested in Ephesians 4:12-13, Christ has not given to pastors the task of doing the ministry by themselves, but of equipping those in the church for such works of service, so that "the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

We believe that it is only as each individual, whether lay or clergy, bears witness to God's grace that the world may come to know Christ and respond to His invitation to have life in abundance. Each member is therefore expected to be a witness for Christ in the world, a light and leaven in society, and a reconciler in a culture of conflict, identifying with the agony and suffering of the world and radiating and exemplifying the Christ of hope. As the people of God, we must either win the world to Christ, or abandon it to those forces that oppose Him. Beyond the diverse forms of ministry is this ultimate concern: that all persons will be brought into a saving relationship with God through Jesus Christ and be renewed after the image of their creator (Colossians 3:10). This means that all Christians are called to minister wherever Christ would have them serve and witness in deeds and words that heal and free. Toward that end, the full participation of all who believe is vital and cannot be evaded if the gospel is to be heard and received.

¶ 305. TRANSFORMATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP. In light of the mission of the Church and our covenant in Christ, the Global Methodist Church engages the commandment to make disciples of Jesus through an intentional process grounded in Scripture and in our Wesleyan heritage.

The Global Methodist Church defines a disciple as a person whose life reflects the character of Christ and extends the mission of Christ in holy love of God and neighbor. The disciple's character and practice are informed by the Scriptures, nurtured by the community of faith, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The disciple's mission is to continue the mission and ministry of Jesus through works of teaching, service, multiplication, mercy, and justice making more obedient disciples who will reflect the character and mission of Christ and expanding the boundaries of Christ's Kingdom further out into the world.

The goal of transformational discipleship ministry in the Global Methodist Church is to make, develop, and nurture disciples of Jesus Christ through small groups where each person is invited, challenged, supported, and held accountable in living sanctified lives that reflect the practices, character, and mission of Christ.

¶ **306. CALLED TO INCLUSIVENESS.** We recognize that God made all creation and saw that it was good. As a diverse people of God who bring special gifts and evidences of God's grace to the unity of the Church and to society, we are called to be faithful to the example of Jesus' ministry to all persons. Inclusiveness means openness, acceptance, and support that enables all persons to participate in the spiritual life of the Church and its service to the community and the world. Therefore, inclusiveness denies every semblance of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or gender (defined throughout this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* by a person's immutable biological traits identified by or before birth). The services of worship of every local church of the Global Methodist Church shall be open to all persons and church activities wherever possible should take place in facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. Similarly, inclusiveness means the freedom for the total involvement of all persons who meet the requirements of our *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* in the membership and leadership of the Church at any level and in every place.

¶ **307. LEGAL DEFINITION OF THE CHURCH.** Affirming the spiritual dimensions of the ministry of all Christians, it is recognized that this ministry exists in the secular world and that civil authorities may seek legal definition predicated on the nature of the Global Methodist Church in seeking fulfillment of this ministry. Accordingly, it is appropriate that the meaning of "Global Methodist Church," "the general Church," "the entire Church," and "the Church" as used in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* should be consonant with the traditional self-understanding of Methodists as to the meaning of these words. These terms refer to the overall denomination and connectional relation and identity of its many local churches, the various conferences and their respective councils, boards, and agencies, and other Church units, which collectively constitute the religious system known as Global Methodism. Under the procedures set forth in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, the "Global Methodist Church" as a denominational whole is not an entity, nor does it possess legal capacities and attributes. It does not and cannot hold title to property, nor does it have any officer, agent, employee, office, or location. Conferences, councils, boards, agencies, local churches, and other units bearing the name are, for the most part, legal entities capable of suing and being sued and possessed of legal capacities.

Section II. The Church and Pastoral Charge

¶ **308. THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH.** The church of Jesus Christ exists in and for the world. The local church is a strategic base from which Christians move out to the structures of society, providing the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs. It is a community of true believers under the Lordship of Christ. It is the redemptive fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by persons divinely called and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit, the church exists for the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers, and the redemption of the world. The function of the local church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is to help people to accept and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and to live their daily lives in light of their relationship with God. Therefore, the local church is to minister to persons in the community where the church is located, to provide appropriate training and nurture to all, to cooperate in ministry with other local churches, to defend God's creation and live as an ecologically responsible community, and to participate in the worldwide mission of the church, as minimal expectations of an authentic church. Each local church shall have a definite evangelistic, nurture, and witness responsibility for its members and the surrounding area and a missional outreach responsibility to the local and global community. It shall be responsible for ministering to all its members, wherever they live, and for

persons who choose it as their church. Such a society of believers, being within the denomination and subject to its discipline, is also an inherent part of the church universal, which is composed of all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

¶ 309. DEFINITION OF A PASTORAL CHARGE. 1. A pastoral charge shall consist of one or more churches that are organized under and subject to the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the Global Methodist Church, with a charge conference, and to which a pastor is appointed to serve.

2. A pastoral charge of two or more churches may be designated a circuit or a cooperative parish.

3. When a pastoral charge is not able to be served by an ordained or licensed minister, the bishop, upon recommendation of the cabinet, may assign a qualified and trained layperson to do the work of ministry in that charge. The layperson is accountable to the presiding elder or another ordained minister appointed to oversee the charge, who will make provision for sacramental ministry. If the assignment is to continue longer than one year, the layperson will begin the process of becoming a certified candidate for ministry, coming under the care of the conference Board of Ministry. The layperson assigned is also accountable to the policies and procedures of the annual conference where assigned.

Section III. Church Membership

¶ 310. ELIGIBILITY. The Global Methodist Church is a part of the holy catholic (universal) church, as we confess in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. In the church, Jesus Christ is proclaimed and professed as Lord and Savior. All people may attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments and, upon taking the vows of membership, become members in any local church in the connection. In the case of persons whose disabilities prevent them from assuming the vows, their legal guardian[s], themselves members in full covenant relationship with God and the Church, the community of faith, may assume the appropriate vows on their behalf.

¶ 311. DEFINITION OF MEMBERSHIP. The membership of a local Global Methodist church shall include all people who have been baptized and all people who have professed their faith.

1. The baptized membership of a local church shall include all baptized people who have received Christian baptism in the local congregation or elsewhere, or whose membership has been transferred to the local church subsequent to baptism in some other congregation.

2. The professing membership of a local Global Methodist church shall include all baptized people who have come into membership by profession of faith through appropriate services of the baptismal covenant in the ritual or by transfer from other churches and who profess the vows of membership in ¶319.

3. For statistical purposes, church membership is equated to the number of people listed on the roll of professing members.

4. All baptized or professing members of any local Global Methodist congregation are members of the Global Methodist Church and members of the church universal.

¶ 312. THE MEANING OF A SACRAMENT. A Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. The sacraments communicate in physical form the Gospel promise that all who come to Christ in repentance and faith receive new life in him. God gives us the sign as a means whereby we receive this grace and as a tangible assurance that we do in fact receive it. The two Sacraments ordained by Christ are Holy Baptism and Holy Communion (also called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist). We receive the Sacraments by faith in Christ, with repentance and

thanksgiving. Faith in Christ enables us to receive the grace of God through the Sacraments, and obedience to Christ is necessary for the benefits of the Sacraments to bear fruit in our lives.

¶ **313. SACRAMENTAL AUTHORITY.** During the English Reformation, the church was defined as the community where the pure Word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered (Methodist Articles of Religion XIII). In keeping with the historic practice of the Christian church, Elders are ordained to oversee the Sacramental life of the church and thus have full authority and responsibility to preside at celebrations of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. Bishops may extend Sacramental authority to Deacons appointed to the office of pastor in a local church or to another specialized ministry setting for the purpose of celebrating the Sacraments. Such Sacramental authority for a Deacon is limited to the appointed ministry setting and is exercised under the oversight and authority of a presiding elder.

¶ **314. THE MEANING OF BAPTISM.** Through Holy Baptism we are united in Christ's death in repentance of our sins; raised to new life in Him through the power of the resurrection; incorporated into the Body of Christ; and empowered through the work of the Holy Spirit to go on to perfection. Holy Baptism is God's gracious gift to us, flowing from the once for all work of Christ Jesus, and our pledge to follow as His disciples.

The church is commanded to baptize disciples in Christ (Matt. 28:19), and the early church followed this practice (Acts 2:38). Entire households—which would have included infants—were baptized (Acts 10:24, 47-48; 16:15; 16:33; 18:8; 1 Cor. 1:16). Including infants in the initiation ritual has a precedent in the covenant membership rite in the Old Testament, in which male infants were circumcised on the eighth day (Gen. 17:9-14). The connection between circumcision and baptism is made explicit in Col. 2:11-12.

Methodists historically have practiced infant baptism (Articles of Religion, XVII). As the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical United Brethren Church states: "We believe children are under the atonement of Christ and as heirs of the Kingdom of God are acceptable subjects for Christian Baptism. Children of believing parents through Baptism become the special responsibility of the Church. They should be nurtured and led to personal acceptance of Christ, and by profession of faith confirm their Baptism" (Article VI).

Parents will decide, in consultation with their pastor, when to baptize their children.

¶ **315. THE MODE AND PRACTICE OF BAPTISM.** Holy Baptism may be performed by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. The outward and visible sign of Holy Baptism is water. Candidates are baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). The inward and spiritual grace is death to sin and new birth to righteousness by faith through union with Christ in His death and resurrection.

Holy Baptism is administered among a gathered congregation. Those present vow on behalf of Christ's Holy Church to receive the baptized into the Church universal, to grow together in grace, and to remember the profession made and benefits received in Holy Baptism. Candidates for Holy Baptism, and those presenting candidates unable to answer for themselves, shall be instructed in the Christian faith and the meaning of Holy Baptism.

Holy Baptism, as initiation into Christ's Holy Church, occurs once in a person's life. Holy Communion serves as the regular and continual affirmation of baptismal vows within the church. Through a service of baptismal remembrance and reaffirmation of baptismal vows people can renew the covenant declared at baptism.

¶ **316. BAPTISMAL VOWS.** In faithfulness with early Christian practice as well as the Wesleyan tradition, those wishing to receive the Sacrament of Holy Baptism within the Global Methodist Church shall first be asked the following questions:

Do you renounce the devil and all his works, and reject the evil powers of this world?

I renounce them.

Do you repent of your sin, turn to Jesus Christ, and confess Him as your Lord and Savior?

I do.

Do you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

I do.

Do you accept the responsibility to resist evil, injustice, and oppression by the grace and power of God?

I do.

Will you obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in them all the days of your life by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit?

I will.

Those who present candidates for Holy Baptism who are unable to answer for themselves will also be asked this question:

Will you nurture these children (persons) in Christ's Holy Church, that by your teaching and example they may be guided to accept God's grace for themselves, profess their faith openly, and lead a Christian life?

I (We) will.

The congregation is then asked to affirm their commitment to support the baptismal candidate in the faith.

Will you who witness these vows encourage [these persons] in the faith and do all in your power to support [these persons] in [their] life in Christ?

We will.

Baptismal candidates (or those presenting candidates unable to answer for themselves) are then asked to confess their faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
[who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.]**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
[the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.]**

¶ 317. THE MEANING OF CONFIRMATION. Through the Rite of Confirmation, we personally renew the covenant declared at our baptism, witness to God’s work in our lives, affirm our commitment to Christ and His Holy Church, and receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands enabling our lifelong journey toward holiness. The Apostles prayed for and laid hands on those who had been baptized.

It is the duty of pastors to prepare confirmands, teaching them the basic tenets of the historic Christian faith, the history and theology of the Wesleyan revival movement, and the practical meaning of church membership in agreement with the *Book of Doctrines & Discipline* and approved catechism.

¶ 318. PROFESSING MEMBERS. Those wishing to become professing members of the Global Methodist Church may present themselves to the pastor of any local congregation and, after any appropriate counsel, be baptized if they have not already done so, and join by professing their faith in Jesus Christ and agreeing to the vows of discipleship. Those wishing to transfer their membership from one congregation of the Global Methodist Church to another may do so by indicating such to the receiving pastor who shall send a request for the transfer to their previous congregation. Persons may also be received by transfer from other denominations in which the Lordship of Christ is affirmed. The pastor in charge has the authority to determine the readiness of any person to assume the vows of membership. A person deferred by the pastor may appeal that decision to the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee or its equivalent. In order to fulfill the mandate to “watch over each other in love,” professing members of the Global Methodist Church shall be encouraged to participate in a class meeting, small group setting, discipleship or other accountability group on a regular basis, as a key part of the fulfillment of their vows of membership.

¶ 319. VOWS OF MEMBERSHIP. In addition to taking the vows of baptism (¶ 316) those wishing to become professing members of the Global Methodist Church shall be asked the following questions before being received into the church:

*Do you believe in God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
Do you confess Jesus Christ as Savior, put your whole trust in His grace, and promise to serve Him as your Lord?*

*Do you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures?
Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to keep God's holy will and commandments and walk in the same all the days of your life as a faithful member of Christ's holy church?
Will you be loyal to Christ through the Global Methodist Church and joining with your brothers and sisters around the world do all in your power to fulfill its mission?*

Will you be a faithful member of the [Name] Global Methodist Church (or alternatively the [Name], a Global Methodist local church), doing all in your power to strengthen its ministries through your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service, and your witness as Christ's representative in this world?

¶ 320. GROWTH IN FAITHFUL DISCIPLESHIP. Faithful membership in the local church is essential for personal growth and for developing a deeper commitment to the will and grace of God. As members involve themselves in private and public prayer, worship, the sacraments, study, Christian action, systematic giving, and holy discipline, they grow in their appreciation of Christ, understanding of God at work in history and the natural order, and an understanding of themselves. Faithful discipleship includes the obligation to participate in the corporate life of the congregation with fellow members of the body of Christ. A member is bound in sacred covenant to shoulder the burdens, share the risks, and celebrate the joys of fellow members. A Christian is called to speak the truth in love, always ready to confront conflict in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

¶ 321. THE MEANING AND MODE OF HOLY COMMUNION. Like Baptism, the sacrament of Holy Communion is a sign of God's grace present through the physical elements, offering the Gospel promise that all who come to Christ in repentance and faith receive new life in him. In Holy Communion also known as the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist (from the Greek word for "thanksgiving"), we are invited into fellowship (*koinonia*) with the real, spiritual presence of Christ Jesus in the whole of the Sacrament; we participate in the communion of saints with the Church universal; and we are given a foretaste of God's eternal banquet, the marriage supper of the Lamb. The Sacrament may be offered to all who repent of sin and desire to draw near to God and lead a life of obedience to Christ.

Holy Communion is normally celebrated in the midst of the congregation, physically gathered to remember and respond to God's mighty acts of salvation revealed in Holy Scripture. Local congregations are urged to ensure regular opportunities for the congregation to commune. John Wesley argued that "it is the duty of every Christian to receive the Lord's Supper as often as he can" (Sermon, "The Duty of Constant Communion"). This is because Christ commands it and we receive great benefits through it; we receive "the food of our souls." God has given us the Lord's Supper, according to Wesley, "that through this means we may be assisted to attain those blessings which he hath prepared for us; that we may obtain holiness on earth, and everlasting glory in heaven." Thus, believers should partake of Holy Communion as often as they can.

Holy Communion recalls Jesus's actions at the Last Supper: he *took* the bread and cup, *gave* thanks, *broke* the bread, and *gave* it to his disciples. Thus, the Communion liturgy should reflect these actions by including:

- the taking/preparation of the bread and cup;

- a time for repentance and confession of sins, including a pronouncement of pardon for sins;
- thanksgiving for the gifts about to be received;
- the words of institution, which recall Jesus's words at the Last Supper;
- the prayer of invocation, in which the Holy Spirit is invited to make the gifts of bread and wine become for us the body and blood of Christ that we may be for the world the body of Christ;
- the breaking of the bread; and
- the distribution of the elements to all who repent of sin and desire to draw near to God and lead a life of obedience to Christ.

Those who cannot (or choose not to) receive the eucharistic elements for whatever reason are still encouraged to come forward to receive a blessing. The elements of Holy Communion may be taken to those whose condition prevents them from being physically present. We encourage the use of non-alcoholic wine or juice for Holy Communion. Non-alcoholic juice must be offered as an option where wine is used.

Section IV. Care of Members

¶ **322. MEMBER INVOLVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.** 1. Each member is called to fulfill their vows of baptism and membership, being faithful by participating in the spiritual formation, worship, stewardship, and service opportunities each church provides. It is the responsibility of each congregation to establish and communicate clear expectations of their members who share in the partnership (*koinonia*) of the gospel (Philippians 1:5), and the responsibility of each member or partner to strive to meet those expectations.

2. The pastor is responsible for ensuring that members are cared for by implementing a discipleship process focused on helping members to “go on to perfection” by loving God with all of their heart, mind, soul, and strength, and by loving their neighbor as themselves. Pastors are charged with equipping all the members of a congregation to be in ministry by meeting people at their point of need and offering them Jesus (Ephesians 4:11-13).

3. All members of the church are called into a loving accountability with one another. If a member neglects the membership vows, however, the congregation shall use every means of encouraging that member to return to an active faith and to lovingly restore them to the fellowship of the church (Matthew 18:15-17). Each local church shall establish a grace-filled process, approved by the presiding elder, to restore negligent members to full participation in the life of the church. Negligent members may be placed on an inactive roll by a two-thirds vote of the church council.

4. Members placed on the inactive roll may remain in that status for up to two years while every attempt is made to return them to active membership. Members on the inactive roll are suspended from serving on church committees or voting on church matters during that time. If an inactive member does not complete the restoration process or show evidence of desiring to return to a more active status after two years, then the charge conference, with the recommendation of the pastor, may remove the member by a two-thirds vote.

5. Upon the approval of the charge conference congregations may require that individuals' membership be intentionally renewed on a yearly basis. In such churches, congregants who do not choose to renew their commitment may be placed on the inactive roll of the church (§ 322.3-4) for up to two years, after which the charge conference may, with the recommendation of the pastor, remove their names from the membership roll by a two-thirds vote.

¶ 323. TRANSFER FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS. A member in good standing in any Christian denomination who has been baptized and who desires to unite with the Global Methodist Church shall be received as either a baptized or a professing member. Such a person may be received as a baptized member by notification of transfer from that person's former church or some certification of Christian baptism, and as a professing member upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith (see §§ 311, 318, 319). In valid Christian baptism water is administered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit by an authorized person. The pastor will report to the sending church the date of reception of such a member. It is recommended that instruction in the faith, work, and polity of the Church be provided for all such persons. Persons received from churches that do not issue letters of transfer or recommendation shall be listed as "Received from Other Denominations."

¶ 324. AFFILIATE AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP. A professing member of the Global Methodist Church, of an affiliated autonomous Methodist or united church, or of a Methodist church that has a concordat agreement with the Global Methodist Church, who resides for an extended period in a city or community at a distance from the member's home church, may on request be enrolled as an affiliate member of a Global Methodist church located in the vicinity of the person's temporary residence. The home pastor shall be notified of the affiliate membership. Such membership shall entitle the person to the fellowship of that church, to its pastoral care and oversight, and to participation in its activities. Local churches may decide whether affiliate members may serve on local church leadership including the holding of offices. Affiliate members may not serve as a lay member to the Annual Conference. Affiliate members shall be counted and reported as a professing member of the home church only. A member of another denomination may become an associate member under the same conditions. This relationship may be terminated at the discretion of the church in which the affiliate or associate membership is held whenever the affiliate or associate member shall move from the vicinity of the church in which the affiliate or associate membership is held.

¶ 325. CONSTITUENCY ROLL. A Constituency Roll shall be maintained in each congregation, comprising four categories of persons: (1) Unbaptized infants ("Cradle Roll"); (2) Individuals over the age of eighteen who have not indicated a desire to become professing members, including the spouses and adult children of professing members, but who are those for whom the local church has a pastoral responsibility; (3) Persons who have attended worship more than twice, or participated more than twice in the ministries of the church, during the previous twelve calendar months ("Potential Members"); (4) Persons who, though unlikely to join the church due to distance or other faith commitments, nevertheless come under the pastoral care of the congregation and are recognized as part of its wider community ("Friends of the Church"). The Constituency Roll shall be reviewed and audited annually.

¶ 326. NON-LOCAL CHURCH SETTINGS. Duly appointed clergy of the Global Methodist Church, while serving as a chaplain of any organization, institution, or military unit, as an extension minister, or as a campus minister, or while otherwise present where a local church is not available,

may receive a person into the membership of the Global Methodist Church under the conditions of ¶ 322. Where possible, before the sacrament of baptism or vows of profession of faith are administered, such appointed minister shall consult with the pastor of the local church (should one be nearby) on the choice of the person concerned. Upon agreement by the pastor, a statement verifying that such sacrament was administered or that such vows were made shall be issued. The baptized or professing member may use the statement to join a local church.

¶ 327. OUTSIDE OF CONGREGATIONAL SETTINGS. Any candidate for church membership who for good reason is unable to appear before the congregation may, at the discretion of the pastor, be received elsewhere in accordance with the rituals of our church. In any such case lay members should be present to represent the congregation. Names of such persons shall be placed on the church roll, and announcement of their reception shall be made to the congregation.

¶ 328. TRANSFER FROM DISCONTINUED LOCAL CHURCHES. If a local church is discontinued, the presiding elder shall transfer its members to another Global Methodist Church or to such other churches as the members may select.

Section V. Membership Records and Reports

¶ 329. MEMBERSHIP RECORDS. 1. Active Membership Roll. Each local church shall accurately maintain a permanent membership record for each baptized or professing member including: a) the person's name, date of birth, address, place of birth, date of baptism, officiating pastor, and sponsors; b) date of confirmation or profession of faith, officiating pastor, and sponsors; c) if transferred from another church, date of reception, sending church, and receiving pastor; d) if transferred to another church, date of transfer, receiving church, and address of receiving church; e) date of removal or withdrawal and reason; f) date of restoration of professing membership and officiating pastor; g) date of death, date and place of funeral/memorial, place of burial, and officiating pastor.

2. Inactive Membership Roll (¶ 322.3-4).

3. Constituency Roll (¶ 325).

4. Affiliate Membership Roll (¶ 324).

5. Associate Membership Roll (¶ 324).

6. In the case of a union or federated church with another denomination, the governing body of such a church may report an equal share of the total membership to each judicatory, and such membership shall be published in the minutes of each church, with a note to the effect that the report is that of a union or federated church, and with an indication of the total actual membership.

7. All baptism, membership, marriage and funeral records are the property of the local church and cannot be sold. If the church is discontinued, these records are placed in the care of the annual conference.

¶ 330. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT AND AUDIT. The pastor shall report to the charge conference annually the names of persons received into the membership of the church or churches of the pastoral charge and the names of persons removed since the last charge conference, indicating how each was received or removed. The church shall be encouraged to audit the membership records annually.

¶ 331. ANNUAL REPORT OF MEMBERS ATTENDING COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. The pastor is encouraged to report annually the names and contact information

for professing and baptized members attending colleges and universities to the chaplain or campus minister of such institutions where the church's ministries exist.

Section VI. Changes in Church Membership or Local Church Membership

¶ **332. MEMBERS WHO MOVE.** If a member of a local church shall move to another community so far removed from the home church that the member cannot participate regularly in its worship and activity, this member shall be encouraged to transfer membership to a Global Methodist church in the community of the newly established residence. As soon as the pastor is reliably informed of this change of residence, actual or contemplated, it shall be the pastor's duty and obligation to assist the member to become established in the fellowship of a church in the community of the future home and to send to a Global Methodist pastor in such community, or to the presiding elder, a letter of notification, giving the latest known address of the person or persons concerned and requesting local pastoral oversight.

When a pastor discovers a member of the denomination residing in the community whose membership is in a church so far removed from the place of residence that the member cannot participate regularly in its worship and activity, it shall be the duty and obligation of the pastor to give pastoral oversight to such person, adding the name to the constituency roll (¶ 325) and to encourage transfer of membership to a Global Methodist church in the community where the member resides.

¶ **333. TRANSFER TO OTHER GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCHES.** When a pastor receives a request for transfer of membership to another Global Methodist congregation that pastor shall send the proper notification directly to the pastor of the congregation to which the member is transferring, or if there is no pastor, to the presiding elder. On receipt of such notification, the pastor or presiding elder enroll the name of the person so transferring after public reception in a regular service of worship, or if circumstances demand, public announcement in such a service. The pastor of the sending church shall then be notified to remove the member from the roll.

¶ **334. TRANSFER TO OTHER DENOMINATIONS.** A pastor, upon receiving a request from a member to transfer to a church of another denomination, or upon receiving such request from a pastor or duly authorized official of another denomination, shall (with the approval of the member) issue notification of transfer and, upon receiving confirmation of the member's reception into another congregation, shall properly record the transfer of such person on the membership record of the local church. If a pastor is informed that a member has without notice united with a church of another denomination, the pastor shall make diligent inquiry and, if the report is confirmed, shall enter "Transferred to a Church of Another Denomination" after the person's name on the membership roll and shall report the same to the next charge conference.

¶ **335. RESTORATION OF PROFESSING MEMBERSHIP.** 1. A person whose name has been removed from professing membership by withdrawal, or action by charge conference, or trial court may ask to be restored to membership in the local church.

2. A person whose membership was recorded as having been withdrawn after becoming a member of another denomination may, when that denomination will not transfer membership, be restored to professing membership by reaffirmation of the membership vows.

3. A person who has withdrawn at his or her own written request may return to the church and, upon reaffirmation of the membership vows, become a professing member.

4. A person whose name was removed by charge conference action may return to the church and, at his or her request, be restored to professing membership in the local church through reaffirmation of the membership vows.

5. A person who withdrew under charges or was removed by trial court may ask to return to the church. Upon evidence of a renewed life, approval of the charge conference, and reaffirmation of the membership vows, the person may be restored to professing membership.

Section VII. Organization and Administration

¶ **336. PRIMARY TASKS.** Each local church shall be organized so that it can pursue its primary task and mission in the context of its own community—reaching out and receiving with joy all who will respond to the invitation to follow Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives, encouraging people in developing their relationship with God, providing opportunities for them to strengthen and grow that relationship in spiritual formation, and supporting them to live lovingly and justly in the power of the Holy Spirit as faithful disciples.

In carrying out its mission, adequate provision should be made to evangelize and spread scriptural holiness by: (1) planning and implementing a program of nurture, outreach, and witness for persons and families within and without the congregation; (2) providing for effective pastoral and lay leadership; (3) providing for financial support, physical facilities, and the legal obligations of the church; (4) utilizing the appropriate relationships and resources of the district and annual conference; (5) providing for the proper creation, maintenance, and disposition of documentary record material of the local church; and (6) seeking inclusiveness in all aspects of its life.

¶ **337. ORGANIZATION.** 1. The basic organizational plan for the local church may be designed by each congregation in such a manner that it provides for a comprehensive program of nurture, outreach and witness to all. In addition to a charge conference, a congregation must have a church council or similar governing board. The charge conference shall determine how to allocate the other responsibilities outlined in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

2. Members of the church's governing board or council shall be persons of genuine Christian character who love the church, are morally disciplined, are committed to the mandate of inclusiveness in the life of the church, are loyal to the ethical standards of the Global Methodist Church and are competent to administer its affairs. It should include confirmed youth and young adult members chosen according to the same standards as adults. All persons with vote must be professing members of the Global Methodist Church in relationship to the local church where they would be serving. The pastor shall be the administrative officer of the church and, as such, shall be an ex officio member of all conferences, boards, councils, commissions, committees, and task forces, unless otherwise restricted by the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

3. Open Meetings. All meetings of official administrative bodies of the local church shall be open to all professing church members. The only exception to this rule is if the committee is dealing with personnel, legal, or contractual issues and a majority of the body votes to close the meeting only for the portion of time that deals with those specific issues. All meetings of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee or its equivalent shall be closed unless the committee invites another person or persons to meet with it to address a particular issue.

¶ **338. THE CHARGE CONFERENCE.** 1. Within the pastoral charge the basic unit in the connectional system in the Global Methodist Church is the charge conference. The charge conference shall therefore be organized from the church or churches in every pastoral charge and shall meet at least annually.

2. The membership of the charge conference shall be all members of the church council or other equivalent body of the local church who are professing members of the Global Methodist Church, together with retired ordained ministers and retired diaconal ministers who elect to hold their membership in that charge conference and any others as may be designated in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. If more than one church is on the pastoral charge, all members of each church council shall be members of the charge conference.

3. The presiding elder shall fix the time and place of the meetings of the charge conference and shall preside at the meetings of the charge conference or may designate an elder to preside.

4. The members present and voting at any duly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.

5. Special sessions may be called by the presiding elder after consultation with the pastor of the charge, or by the pastor with the written consent of the presiding elder. The purpose of such special session shall be stated in the call, and only such business shall be transacted as is in harmony with the purposes stated in the call. Any such special session may be convened as a church conference.

6. Notice of time and place of a regular or special session of the charge conference shall be given at least ten days in advance by three or more of the following (except as local laws may otherwise provide): from the pulpit of the church, in its weekly bulletin, in a local church publication, by email, or by mail.

7. A charge conference shall be conducted in the language of the majority, with adequate provision being made for translation.

8. A joint charge conference for two or more pastoral charges may be held at the same time and place, as the presiding elder may determine.

9. *The Church Conference*. To encourage broader participation by members of the church, the charge conference may be convened as a church conference, extending the vote to all professing members of the local church present at such meetings. It shall be called at the discretion of the presiding elder or following a written request to the presiding elder by one of the following: the pastor, the church council, or 10 percent of the professing members of the local church. In any case a copy of the request shall be given to the pastor. Additional regulations governing the call and conduct of the charge conference shall apply also to the church conference. A joint church conference for two or more churches may be held at the same time and place as the presiding elder may determine. A church conference shall be conducted in the language of the majority with adequate provision being made for translation.

¶ 339. POWERS AND DUTIES. 1. The charge conference shall be the connecting link between the local church, the annual conference, and the general church and shall have general oversight of the church council(s) and the overall ministry of the local church.

2. The charge conference, the presiding elder, and the pastor shall organize and administer the pastoral charge and churches according to the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. When the membership size, program scope, mission resources, or other circumstances so require, the charge conference may, in consultation with and upon the approval of the presiding elder, modify the organizational plans, provided that the provisions of ¶¶ 336-337 are observed.

3. The primary responsibilities of the charge conference in the annual meeting shall be to review and evaluate the total mission and ministry of the church, receive reports, elect leaders, and adopt objectives and goals recommended by the church council that are in keeping with the objectives of the Global Methodist Church.

4. The charge conference recording secretary shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings and shall be the custodian of all records and reports and, with the presiding officer,

shall sign the minutes. A copy of the minutes shall be provided for the presiding elder, and a permanent copy shall be retained for church files. When there is only one local church on a charge, the secretary of the church council shall be the secretary of the charge conference. When there is more than one church on a charge, one of the secretaries of the church councils shall be elected by the charge conference to serve as its secretary.

5. Each charge is encouraged to be inclusive in the make-up of the council so that all segments of the congregation are represented.

6. The charge conference may establish a limit to the consecutive terms of office for any or all of the elected or appointed officers of the local church, unless the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* sets a specific limit. It is recommended that no officer serve more than three consecutive years in the same office.

7. The charge conference shall examine and recommend to the board of ministry, faithfully adhering to the provisions of this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, candidates for ordained ministry who have been professing members in good standing of the Global Methodist Church or its predecessors for at least one year; whose gifts, evidence of God's grace, and call to the ministry clearly establish them as candidates; and who have met the educational requirements. It is out of the faith and witness of the congregation that men and women respond to God's call to ordained ministry. Every local church should intentionally nurture candidates for ordained ministry, providing for spiritual and financial support, and for their education and formation as servant leaders for the ministry of the whole people of God.

8. The charge conference shall examine and recommend, faithfully adhering to the provisions of this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, renewal of candidacy of candidates for the ordained ministry.

9. The charge conference shall inquire annually into the gifts, labors, and usefulness of the certified lay ministers related to the charge and recommend to the conference Board of Ministry those persons who have met the standards for a certified lay minister.

10. The charge conference shall receive reports annually on all local church organized mission teams and shall forward the combined report through the regular annual local church statistical report.

11. The charge conference shall, in consultation with the presiding elder, set the compensation of the appointed clergy.

12. In preparation for and at the charge conference, it shall be the responsibility of the presiding elder, the pastor, and the lay member(s) of the annual conference and/or the church lay leader(s) to interpret to each charge conference the importance of apportioned funds, explaining the causes supported by each of them and their place in the total program of the Church. Payment in full of these apportionments by local churches is the first benevolent responsibility of the church.

13. The charge conference shall receive and act on the annual report from the pastor concerning the church's membership.

14. In those instances where there are two or more churches on a pastoral charge, the charge conference may provide for a charge or parish council, a charge-wide or parish treasurer, and such other officers, commissions, committees, and task groups as necessary to carry on the work of the charge. All churches of the charge shall be represented on such charge-wide or parish committees or boards. Charge-wide or parish organization shall be consistent with disciplinary provisions for the local church.

15. In instances of multiple church charges, the charge conference shall provide for an equitable distribution of parsonage maintenance and upkeep expense or adequate housing allowance among the several churches.

16. The charge conference shall promote awareness of and concurrence with the Doctrinal Standards and General Rules of the Global Methodist Church (§§ 101- 109), and with policies relative to the Social Witness of the church (§§ 201-202).

17. The charge conference may provide for the sponsoring of and the planting of new faith communities.

18. The charge conference shall have such other duties and responsibilities as the General or annual conference may commit to it.

¶ 340. ELECTION OF LEADERS. The charge or church conference shall elect by simple majority vote leaders who shall be professing members of the Global Methodist Church in the local church where they would be serving as needed to fulfill the mission of the church. In filling the offices of the church, special attention should be given to the inclusion of women, men, youth, young adults, persons over sixty-five years of age, persons with disabilities, and persons of various racial, ethnic, or tribal identities. Local church offices may be shared between two persons.

¶ 341. REMOVAL OF OFFICERS AND FILLING OF VACANCIES. If a leader or officer who has been elected by the charge conference is unable or unwilling to perform the duties reasonably expected of such a leader or officer, the presiding elder may call a special session of the charge conference. The purpose of such special session shall be stated as “Consideration for the removal of person(s) from office and the election of person(s) to fill vacancy(ies).” The Nominations and Leadership Development Committee or another group charged with that responsibility shall meet as soon as possible after the special session of the charge conference has been announced and shall propose person(s) who may be elected if vacancy(ies) occur at the charge conference. If the charge conference votes to remove a person or persons from office, the vacancy(ies) shall be filled in the manner prescribed for elections. When a local church trustee is under consideration for removal and the pastoral charge consists of two or more churches, a church local conference shall be called instead of a charge conference.

¶ 342. DUTIES OF LEADERS 1. Out of the professing membership of each local church, there shall be elected by the charge conference a *lay leader* who shall function as the primary lay representative of the laity in that local church and shall have the following responsibilities:

a) fostering awareness of the role of laity both within the congregation and through their ministries in the home, workplace, community, and world, and finding ways within the community of faith to recognize all these ministries;

b) meeting regularly with the pastor to discuss the state of the church and the needs for ministry;

c) serving as a member of the charge conference and the church council, the Finance Committee, the Nominations and Leadership Development Committee, and the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, where, along with the pastor, the lay leader shall serve as an interpreter of the actions and programs of the annual conference and the general Church (to be better equipped to comply with this responsibility, it is recommended that the lay leader also serve as a lay member of annual conference);

d) continuing involvement in study and training opportunities to develop a growing understanding of the Church’s reason for existence and the types of ministry that will most effectively fulfill the Church’s mission;

e) assisting in advising the church council of opportunities available and the needs expressed for a more effective ministry of the church through its laity in the community;

f) informing the laity of training opportunities provided by the annual conference. Where possible, the lay leader shall attend training opportunities to strengthen his or her work. The lay leader is urged to become a certified lay minister. In instances where more than one church is on a charge, the charge conference shall elect additional lay leaders so that there will be one lay leader in each church. Associate lay leaders may be elected to work with the lay leader in any local church, sharing the responsibilities.

g) The lay leader, at each local church's discretion, may also serve as the chairperson of the church council or other governing body.

2. The **lay member(s) of the annual conference** and alternates may be elected annually or to coincide with the conferences of the general church. If the charge's lay member of the annual conference shall cease to be a member of the charge or shall for any reason fail to serve, an alternate member in the order of election shall serve in place. Both the lay members and the alternates shall have been professing members in good standing of the Global Methodist Church or its predecessor for at least two years and shall have been active participants for at least four years next preceding their election, except in a newly organized church. Churches that become part of an ecumenical shared ministry shall not be deprived of their right of representation by a lay member in the annual conference. The lay member(s) of the annual conference, along with the pastor, shall serve as an interpreter of the actions of the annual conference session. These persons shall report to the church council on actions of the annual conference as soon as possible.

3. The **church council or governing board chairperson** shall be elected by the charge conference annually. The chairperson shall be a professing member of the Global Methodist Church in the local church where he or she would be serving, and shall have the following responsibilities:

- a) leading the council in fulfilling its responsibilities;
- b) preparing and communicating the agenda of the council meetings in consultation with the pastor(s), lay leader, and other appropriate persons;
- c) reviewing and assigning responsibility for the implementation of actions taken by the council;
- d) communicating with members of the council and others as appropriate to permit informed action at council meetings;
- e) coordinating the various activities of the council;
- f) providing initiative and leadership for the council as it engages in planning, establishing of objectives and goals, and evaluating ministry;
- g) participating in leadership training programs as offered by the annual conference and/or district.

h) The church council chairperson shall be entitled to attend meetings of all boards and committees of the church unless specifically limited by the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. The chairperson is encouraged to attend annual conference.

4. In congregations with an alternate system of governance, individuals shall be named to represent the functions fulfilled by a Pastor-Parish Relation and Finance Committee and a Board of Trustees.

¶ **343. THE CHURCH COUNCIL.** 1. The church council, or its equivalent governing body, shall provide for planning and implementing a ministry of evangelizing and spreading scriptural holiness through nurture, outreach, witness, and resources in the local church. It shall also provide for the administration of its organization and temporal life. It shall envision, plan, implement, and annually evaluate the mission and ministry of the church. The church council shall be amenable to and function as the administrative agency of the charge conference.

2. Mission and Ministry—Nurture, outreach, and witness ministries and their accompanying responsibilities include:

a) The nurturing ministries of the congregation shall give attention to but not be limited to education, worship, Christian formation, membership care, small groups, and stewardship. Attention must be given to the needs of individuals and families of all ages.

b) The outreach ministries of the church shall give attention to local and larger community ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy.

c) The witness ministries of the church shall give attention to developing and strengthening evangelistic efforts of sharing personal and congregational stories of Christian experience, faith, and service; communications; certified lay ministers; and other means that give expressions of witness for Jesus Christ.

d) The leadership development and resourcing ministries shall give attention to the ongoing preparation and development of lay and clergy leaders for the ministry of the church.

3. Meetings

a) The council shall meet at least quarterly. The chairperson or the pastor may call special meetings.

b) It is recommended that the council make decisions by trying to achieve a consensus driven by the Holy Spirit. If, in the opinion of the chair, a consensus cannot be achieved, then the Council may make a decision by voting with a simple majority as the standard.

4. Other Responsibilities—It will also be the responsibility of the church council to:

a) Review the membership of the local church;

b) Fill interim vacancies occurring among the lay officers of the church between sessions of the annual charge conference;

c) Establish the budget on recommendation of the Finance Committee or its equivalent body and ensure adequate provision for the financial needs of the church;

d) Recommend to the charge conference the salary and other remuneration of the pastor(s) and staff members after receiving recommendations from the Pastor-Parish (or Staff-Parish) Relations Committee or its equivalent body;

e) Review the recommendation of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee regarding provision of adequate housing for the pastor(s), and report the same to the charge conference for approval. Housing provisions shall comply with the annual conference housing policy and parsonage standards. Housing shall not be considered as part of compensation or remuneration except to the extent provided for in denominational pension and benefit plans.

5. Membership—The charge conference will determine the size of the church council. Members of the church council shall be involved in the mission and ministry of the congregation. The membership of the council may consist of as few as eight persons or as many as the charge conference deems appropriate. The membership shall include but not be limited to the chairs of the committees responsible for pastor-parish relations, the finances of the church, the management of the church's properties and assets, the lay leader, the lay member(s) of the annual conference, and all appointed clergy.

6. Quorum—The members present and voting at any duly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.

Section VIII. Local Church Administrative Committees

¶ 344. **NOMINATIONS AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.** As the charge conference determines, there may be elected annually by that conference a Nominations and Leadership Development Committee or its equivalent that is composed of professing members of the local church or the committee's responsibilities may be assigned to a different group. The responsibility of this committee is to identify, develop, deploy, evaluate, and monitor Christian spiritual leadership for the local congregation. Members of the committee shall engage in and be attentive to developing and enhancing their own Christian spiritual life in light of the mission of the Church. In conducting its work, the committee shall engage in biblical and theological reflection on the mission of the church, the primary task, and ministries of the local church. It shall provide a means of identifying the spiritual gifts and abilities of the church's members. The committee shall work with the church council or equivalent body, to determine the diverse ministry tasks of the congregation and the skills needed for leadership.

a) The Nominations and Leadership Development Committee shall serve throughout the year to guide the church council on matters regarding the leadership (other than employed staff) of the congregation, so as to focus on mission and ministry as the context for service; guide the development and training of spiritual leaders; recruit, nurture, and support spiritual leaders; and assist the church council in assessing changing leadership needs.

b) The committee shall recommend to the charge conference, at its annual session, the names of people to serve as officers and leaders of designated ministries of the church council required for the work of the church and as the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the church requires or as the charge conference deems necessary to its work.

c) The pastor shall be the chairperson. A layperson elected by the committee shall serve as the vice chairperson of the committee.

d) To secure experience and stability, the membership may be divided into three classes, one of which would be elected each year for a three-year term. Retiring members of the committee shall not succeed themselves. Only one person from an immediate family residing in the same household shall serve on the committee. When vacancies occur during the year, successors shall be elected by the church council.

e) In the identification and selection process, care shall be given that the leadership of ministries reflects inclusivity and diversity.

¶ 345. **PASTOR-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE.** 1. As the charge conference determines, there may be elected annually by that conference a Pastor-Parish Relations Committee or its equivalent composed of professing members of the local church or charge, or the committee's responsibilities may be assigned to a different group. Where the church employs additional program staff beyond the pastor in charge, the committee may be structured as the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, with the same responsibilities. People serving on this committee must be engaged in and attentive to their Christian spiritual development to give proper leadership in the committee's responsibilities. In conducting its work, the committee shall identify and clarify its values for ministry. It shall engage in biblical and theological reflection on the mission of the church, the primary task and ministries of the local church, and on the role and work of the pastor(s) and staff as they carry out their leadership responsibilities.

2. No staff member or immediate family member of a pastor or staff member may serve on the committee. Only one person from an immediate family residing in the same household shall serve on the committee. The lay leader is automatically a member of the committee.

3. To secure experience and stability, the membership may be divided into three classes, one of which shall be elected each year for a three-year term. The lay leader is exempt from the three-year term on this committee. Members of the committee may succeed themselves for a second three-year term. When vacancies occur during the year, the church council shall elect successors.

4. In those charges where there is more than one church, the committee shall include at least one representative and the lay leader from each local church.

5. The Pastor-Parish Relations Committees of charges that are in cooperative parish ministries shall meet together to consider the professional leadership needs of the cooperative parish ministry as a whole, or one parish-wide Pastor-Parish Relations Committee may be formed.

6. The committee shall meet at least quarterly. It shall meet additionally at the request of the bishop, the presiding elder, the pastor, any other person accountable to the committee, or the chairperson of the committee. The committee shall meet only with the knowledge of the pastor. The pastor shall be present at each meeting of the committee, except where he or she voluntarily excuses himself or herself. The committee may meet with the presiding elder without the appointed clergy under consideration being present. However, the appointed clergy under consideration shall be notified prior to such meeting with the presiding elder and be brought into consultation immediately thereafter. The committee shall meet in closed session and information shared in the committee shall be confidential.

7. In the event that only one congregation on a charge containing more than one church has concerns it wishes to share, its member(s) in the committee may meet separately with the pastor or any other person accountable to the committee or the presiding elder, but only with the knowledge of the pastor.

8. The duties of the committee shall include the following:

a. To encourage, strengthen, nurture, support, and respect the pastor(s) and staff and their family(ies).

b. To promote unity in the church(es).

c. To confer with and counsel the pastor(s) and staff on matters pertaining to their effectiveness in ministry; assessing their unique gifts and abilities; priorities in the use of gifts, skills, and time; relationships with the congregation; the person's health and self-care, including conditions that may impede their effectiveness of ministry; and to interpret the nature and function of the ministry to the congregation, while interpreting the congregation's needs, values, and traditions to the pastor(s) and staff.

d. To provide evaluation at least annually for the use of the pastor(s) and staff to enhance their effective ministry and to identify continuing educational needs and plans.

e. To communicate and interpret to the congregation the nature and function of ministry in the Global Methodist Church regarding open itinerancy and the preparation for ordained ministry.

f. To develop and approve written job descriptions and titles for associate pastors and other staff members in cooperation with the senior pastor. The term associate pastor is used as a general term to indicate any pastoral appointment in a local church other than the pastor in charge. Committees are encouraged to develop specific titles for associate pastors that reflect the job descriptions and expectations.

g. To arrange with the church council for the necessary time and financial assistance for the attendance of the pastor and/or staff at such continuing education, self-care, and spiritual renewal events as may serve their professional and spiritual growth, and to encourage staff members to seek professional certification in their fields of specialization.

h. To enlist, interview, evaluate, review, and recommend annually to the charge conference lay ministers and persons for candidacy for ordained ministry and to enlist and refer to the appropriate agencies persons for candidacy for missionary service, recognizing that the Global

Methodist Church affirms the biblical and theological support of persons regardless of gender, race, ethnic or tribal origin, or disabilities for these ministries. Neither the pastor nor any member of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall be present during the consideration of a candidacy application or renewal for a member of their immediate family. The committee shall provide to the charge conference a list of persons from the charge who are preparing for ordained ministry, lay ministry, and/or missionary service, and shall maintain contact with these persons, supplying the charge conference with a progress report on each person.

i. To confer with the pastor and/or other appointed members of the staff if it should become evident that the best interests of the charge and/or pastor(s) will be served by a change of pastor(s). The committee shall cooperate with the pastor(s), the presiding elder, and the bishop in securing clergy leadership. Its relationship to the presiding elder and the bishop shall be advisory only. The committee shall not recommend to the presiding elder or bishop a change of pastor(s) without first discussing its concerns with the pastor(s) involved.

j. After consultation with the pastor, to communicate with the Nominations and Leadership Development Committee when there is a need for other leaders, and/or the church council when there is a need for employed staff, to work in areas where utilization of the gifts of the pastor(s) or staff proves an inappropriate stewardship of time (cf. Acts 6:2).

k. The committee and the pastor shall recommend to the church council a written statement of policies and procedures regarding the process for hiring, contracting, evaluating, promoting, retiring, and dismissing staff personnel who are not ordained clergy subject to episcopal appointment. Until such a policy has been adopted, the committee and the pastor shall have the authority to hire, contract, evaluate, promote, retire, and dismiss non-appointed personnel. The committee shall further recommend to the church council a provision for adequate health and life insurance and severance pay for all lay employees. In addition, the committee shall recommend that the church council provide an equitable pension with local church contribution for lay employees serving at least half time. The church council shall have authority to provide such pension benefits through a denominational pension program.

l. Members of the Pastor-Parish (or Staff-Parish) Relations Committee shall keep themselves informed of personnel matters related to the denomination's policies, professional standards, liability issues, and civil law. They are responsible for communicating and interpreting such matters to staff. Committee members should make themselves available for educational and training opportunities that will enable them to be effective in their work.

m. To consult on matters pertaining to pulpit supply, proposals for compensation, travel expense, vacation, health and life insurance, pension, housing (which may be a church-owned parsonage or housing allowance in lieu of parsonage if in compliance with the policy of the annual conference), continuing education, and other practical matters affecting the work and families of the pastor and staff, and to make annual recommendations regarding such matters to the church council, reporting budget items to the Finance Committee. The parsonage is to be mutually respected by the pastor's family as the property of the church and by the church as a place of privacy for the pastor's family. The committee will follow up to assure timely resolution of parsonage problems affecting the health of the pastor or pastor's family. The chairperson of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, the chairperson of the Board of Trustees, and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to assure proper maintenance and to give immediate resolution to parsonage issues affecting the family's health and well-being.

¶ **346. BOARD OF TRUSTEES.** Unless otherwise provided for in the governance structure of a local church, within each congregation of the Global Methodist Church there shall be a Board of Trustees, consisting of at least five professing members of the church representing the gender, race, **Book of Doctrines and Discipline & Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules** **Petition 110 - Page 44**

and age of the congregation, provided that all members shall be of legal age as determined by the relevant and controlling civil law. The pastor of the congregation(s) shall be a member with voice but without vote of the Board of Trustees and may not be counted for the purpose of achieving a quorum or calculating a majority.

1. *Election of Trustees.* Members of the Board of Trustees of each local congregation may be elected by the charge or church conference to a three-year term, equally divided into three classes, with one-third elected each year. A member of the Board of Trustees may be re-elected for no more than one additional term, and no member may serve longer than six consecutive years.

2. *Vacancies and Removal of Trustees.* Should a trustee withdraw from the membership of the local church or be excluded therefrom, trusteeship therein shall automatically cease from the date of such withdrawal or exclusion. Should a trustee of a local church or a director of an incorporated local church be unable to carry out their responsibilities, or when he or she refuses to execute properly a legal instrument relating to any property of the church when directed to do so by the charge conference, and when all legal requirements have been satisfied in reference to such execution, the charge conference may by majority vote declare the trustee's or director's membership on the Board of Trustees or Board of Directors vacated. Vacancies occurring in the Board of Trustees shall be filled by election for the unexpired term. Such election shall be held in the same manner as for Trustees (§ 346.1). A vacancy other than the preceding that occurs ad interim may be filled until the next charge conference by the church council.

3. *Organization.* The Board of Trustees may organize as follows:

a. Within thirty days after the beginning of the calendar or conference year (whichever applies to the term of office), the Board of Trustees shall convene at a time and place designated by the chairperson or the vice chairperson for the purpose of electing officers of the board for the ensuing year and transacting any other business properly brought before it.

b. The board shall elect from its members, to hold office for a term of one year or until their successors shall be elected, a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, and, if need requires, a treasurer; provided, however, that the chairperson and vice chairperson shall not be members of the same class; and provided further, that the offices of secretary and treasurer may be held by the same person. The charge conference may, if it is necessary to conform to the local laws, substitute the designations *president* and *vice president* in place of *chairperson* and *vice chairperson*.

c. Where necessary as a result of the incorporation of a local church, the corporation directors, in addition to electing officers as provided above, shall ratify and confirm by appropriate action and, if required by law, elect as officers of the corporation the treasurer(s) elected by the charge conference in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. If more than one account is maintained in the name of the corporation in any financial institution(s), each such account and the treasurer thereof shall be appropriately designated.

4. *Meetings.* The board shall meet at the call of the pastor or of its chairperson at least three times per year at such times and places as designated in the meeting notice at least one week prior to the appointed time of the meeting. Waiver of notice may be used as a means to validate meetings legally where the usual notice is impracticable. A majority of the members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum.

5. *Powers and Limitations.* The board shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

a. Oversight, and care of all real property owned by the local church and of all property and equipment acquired directly by the local church or by any group, board, class, commission, or similar organization connected with it. The Board shall not, however, violate the rights of any local church organization elsewhere granted in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, nor prevent or interfere with the pastor in the use of any of the said property for religious services or other proper meetings or

purposes recognized by the law, usages, and customs of the church. Reflecting the historic understanding of Methodism, pews in the Global Methodist Church shall always be free.

b. The use of a local congregation's facilities or properties by an outside organization may be granted by the Board of Trustees after consideration of whether the purposes and programs of that organization are consistent with the values of the congregation and the Global Methodist Church.

c. Should the congregation possess a parsonage offered to the pastor for housing, the chairperson of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, the chairperson or designee of the Board of Trustees, and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to assure proper maintenance and to give immediate resolution to parsonage issues affecting the family's health and well-being. The parsonage is to be mutually respected by the pastor's family as the property of the church and by the church as a place of privacy for the pastor's family (§ 345.8m). The Board of Trustees are responsible to ensure timely resolution of parsonage problems affecting the health and well-being of the pastor or pastor's family and shall provide that the parsonage be maintained in good condition.

d. Subject to the direction of the charge conference, the Board of Trustees shall receive and administer all bequests made to the local church, shall receive and administer all trusts, and shall invest all trust funds of the local church in conformity with laws of the country, state, or political unit in which the local church is located. Nevertheless, upon notice to the Board of Trustees, the charge conference may delegate the power, duty, and authority to receive, administer, and invest bequests, trusts, and trust funds to a permanent endowment committee or to a local church foundation.

e. The board shall conduct an annual accessibility audit of their buildings, grounds, and facilities to discover and identify any existing physical, architectural, or communication barriers that impede the full participation of people with disabilities and shall make plans and determine priorities for the elimination of all such barriers.

6. *Annual Report.* The board shall annually make a written report to the charge conference, in which shall be included the following:

a. The legal description and the reasonable valuation of each parcel of real estate owned by the church;

b. The specific name of the grantor in each deed of conveyance of real estate to the local church;

c. An inventory and the reasonable valuation of all personal property owned by the local church;

d. The amount of income received from any income-producing property and a detailed list of expenditures in connection therewith;

e. The amount received during the year for building, rebuilding, remodeling, and improving real estate, and an itemized statement of expenditures;

f. Outstanding capital debts, payoff date, and how contracted;

g. A detailed statement of the insurance carried on each parcel of real estate, indicating whether restricted by co-insurance or other limiting conditions and whether adequate insurance is carried;

h. The name of the custodian of all legal papers of the local church, and where they are kept;

i. A detailed list of all trusts in which the local church is the beneficiary, specifying where and how the funds are invested

j. An evaluation of all church properties, including the chancel areas, to ensure accessibility to persons with disabilities, and when applicable, a plan and timeline for resolving barriers to accessibility (§ 346.5e).

¶ **347. FINANCE COMMITTEE.** 1. As the charge conference determines, there may be elected annually by that conference a Finance Committee or its equivalent composed of the committee chairperson, the pastor(s), a lay member of the annual conference, the chairperson of the church council, the chairperson or designee of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, a representative of the Board of Trustees to be selected by that board, the chairperson of the ministry group on stewardship (if any), the lay leader, the financial secretary, the treasurer, the church business administrator (if any), and other members to be added as the charge conference may determine. Alternatively, the committee's responsibilities may be assigned to a different group. The chairperson of the Finance Committee shall be a member of the church council. The financial secretary, treasurer, and church business administrator, if paid employees, shall be members without vote. The positions of treasurer and financial secretary may not be combined and held by one person, and the persons holding these two positions should not be immediate family members. No immediate family members of any appointed clergy may serve as treasurer, Finance Committee chair, financial secretary, counter, or serve in any paid or unpaid position under the responsibilities of the Finance Committee. These restrictions would apply only to the church or charge where the clergy serves.

2. The Finance Committee shall oversee the stewardship of financial resources as their priority throughout the year, seeking as part of the ministry of discipleship to move members toward tithing and beyond, with an attitude of generosity.

3. All financial requests to be included in the annual budget of the local church shall be submitted to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee shall compile annually a complete budget for the local church and submit it to the church council for review and adoption. The Finance Committee shall be charged with responsibility for developing and implementing plans that will raise sufficient income to meet the budget adopted by the church council. It shall administer the funds received according to instructions from the church council. The committee shall carry out the church council's directions in guiding the treasurer(s) and financial secretary.

4. The committee shall designate at least two persons not of one immediate family residing in the same household to count the offering. They shall work under the supervision of the financial secretary. A record of all funds received shall be given to the financial secretary and treasurer. Funds received shall be deposited promptly in accordance with the procedures established by the Finance Committee. The financial secretary shall keep records of the contributions and payments.

5. The church treasurer(s) shall disburse all money contributed to causes represented in the local church budget, and such other funds and contributions as the church council may determine. The treasurer(s) shall remit each month to the conference treasurer all denominational and conference benevolence funds then on hand. The church treasurer shall make regular and detailed reports on funds received and expended to the Finance Committee and the church council. The treasurer(s) shall be adequately bonded.

6. The Finance Committee shall establish written financial policies to document the internal controls of the local church. The written financial policies should be reviewed for adequacy and effectiveness annually by the Finance Committee and submitted as a report to the charge conference annually.

7. The committee shall make provision for an annual audit of the financial statements of the local church and all its organizations and accounts. The committee shall make a full and complete report to the annual charge conference. A local church audit is defined as an independent evaluation of the financial reports and records and the internal controls of the local church by a qualified person or persons. The audit shall be conducted to reasonably verify the accuracy and reliability of financial reporting, determine whether assets are being safeguarded, and determine compliance with local law, local church policies and procedures, and the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. The audit may include: 1) a review of the cash and investment reconciliations; 2) interviews with the treasurer,

financial secretary, pastor(s), Finance Committee chair, business manager, those who count offerings, church secretary, etc., with inquiries regarding compliance with existing written financial policies and procedures; 3) a review of journal entries and authorized check signers for each checking and investment account; and 4) other procedures requested by the Finance Committee. The audit shall be performed by an audit committee composed of persons unrelated to the persons listed in 2 above or by an independent certified public accountant (CPA), accounting firm, or equivalent.

8. The committee shall recommend to the church council proper depositories for the church's funds. Funds received shall be deposited promptly in the name of the local church.

9. Contributions designated for specific causes and objects shall be promptly forwarded according to the intent of the donor and shall not be retained or used for any other purpose.

10. After the budget of the local church has been approved, additional appropriations or changes in the budget must be approved by the church council.

11. The committee shall prepare at least annually a report to the church council of all designated funds that are separate from the current expense budget.

¶ 348. OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM COMMITTEES. The church council may recommend such other committees it deems advisable, whose members are to be elected by the charge conference, including but not limited to: communications committee, discipleship committee, records and history committee, missions committee, memorial gifts committee, and ministries that address the unique needs and interests of both women and men.

Section IX. Connectional Funding

¶ 349. LOCAL CHURCH CONNECTIONAL FUNDING. 1. *Wesleyan Value of Connectional Funding* - The Global Methodist Church, while grace-filled, recognizes that there is a season of accountability throughout our personal and public lives. John Wesley's societal structure of using mutual accountability groups indicates the responsibilities placed upon each of us in how we perceive and manage the assets with which God has entrusted us. From its earliest days, the Methodist movement has been one of mutual support within a connectional system. A connectional system allows churches to work together to make larger kingdom impacts, ensure proper accountability and credentialing, and maintain theological integrity. In short, we are better together. The Global Methodist Church values its connectional system and wishes to see it thrive in its support and oversight role for local churches.

2. Each local church of the Global Methodist Church contributes financially to the ministry of the Church beyond the local church through connectional funding. The local church treasurer or designee shall calculate the amount to be remitted in accordance with ¶¶ 349.4 and .5 by January 30 of each calendar year based on the prior year's local church operating income.

3. Connectional funding shall not include amounts due from the local church for insurance benefits and pension contributions for its pastor(s) and any additional staff who are part of such plans of the Global Methodist Church. Such payments for insurance benefits and pension contributions for plan participants are due in addition to connectional funding remittances by the local church.

4. In calculating the amount of connectional funding to be remitted,
a. the following items are to be included in local church operating income: giving from identified and not identified donors, investment income utilized for operations, building use fees and rental income, and other unrestricted operating income.

b. the following items are to be excluded from local church operating income: benevolences (outside ministries supported by the local church), capital campaign receipts, borrowed funds, fundraisers for non-operating expenses, receipts for reduction of indebtedness, memorials, endowments, and bequests whether restricted or non-restricted, receipts for Global Methodist Church special mission programs, grants and support from other organizations, sales of land, buildings or other church assets, and other non-operating income received.

5. The amount remitted by the local church for connectional funding shall be calculated as follows:

a. For general church connectional funding, not more than 1.5% of local church operating income (see ¶ 349.4) as set by the General Conference;

b. For annual conference connectional funding, not more than 5% of local church operating income (see ¶ 349.4) as set by the respective annual conference.

6. The percentage in ¶ 349.5a shall only be increased upon the vote of two-thirds of the General Conference. The percentage in ¶ 349.5b shall only be increased upon the vote of two-thirds of the respective annual conference.

7. Each month the local church shall remit one-twelfth of the annual sum of general church connectional funding to the Treasurer of the Global Methodist Church and one-twelfth of the annual conference connectional funding to the respective annual conference.

8. The Transitional Leadership Council or its designee may designate a local church as a missional church and exempt such a church from paying general church or annual conference connectional funding for up to five years from the date of designation. Missional churches shall be church plants, church re-starts, or churches located in or serving economically disadvantaged communities.

9. The pastor(s) and leadership of the local church shall interpret connectional funding to the members of the local church so that connectional funding is embraced by such membership and regularly share information with the members of the local church to educate and interpret such connectional funding.

10. The failure of a local church to remit connectional funding in full as calculated annually may result in the Transitional Leadership Council or designee proceeding under ¶¶ 354 to involuntarily disaffiliate the local church from the Global Methodist Church.

Section X. The Method of Organizing a New Church

¶ 350. ORGANIZATION OF A NEW CHURCH. 1. With the sponsorship of a Global Methodist local church or group of churches, a new local church may be planted by any lay person or clergy person of the Global Methodist Church. A sponsoring local church, or group of local churches or group of churches shall provide accountability for the project. In the absence of a sponsoring church or group of churches, an annual conference, through its designated leadership, may authorize the planting of a new local church and provide accountability.

2. Each annual conference shall determine the criteria required for the chartering of a new local church.

The president *pro tempore* shall designate the district to which the new church shall belong.

3. Upon the request of the organizing pastor, the presiding elder shall call the interested people to meet at an appointed time for the purpose of organizing them into a chartered local church, or may by written authorization designate an elder in the district to call such a meeting.

Following a time of worship, opportunity shall be given to those in attendance to present themselves for membership, whether by transfer or profession of faith.

Upon organization, the new local church shall function under the provisions of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

Section XI. Transfer of a Local Church

¶ **351. TRANSFER OF A LOCAL CHURCH.** A local church may be transferred from one annual conference to another by a two-thirds vote of the professing members who are present and voting in the church council and the church conference, and a simple majority vote by each of the two annual conferences involved. Upon announcement of the required majorities by the bishop or bishops involved, the transfer shall immediately be effective. The votes required may originate in the local church or either of the annual conferences involved and shall be effective regardless of the order in which taken. In each case an action shall remain effective unless and until rescinded prior to the completion of the transfer by a majority vote of those present and voting.

Section XII. Shared Ministry

¶ **352. COOPERATIVE PARISH.** 1. A cooperative parish is a designated geographical area containing two or more local churches that have agreed to work together under unified parish leadership. The pastor and any other appointed clergy or employed staff work as a unified ministry team. Each local church has its own church council, but there is also a parish council consisting of representatives from each local church council that governs the coordinated efforts of the cooperative parish. There will also be a parish-wide Pastor-Parish or Staff-Parish Relations Committee. There may also be other parish-wide committees where financial support, property, or program ministry are shared parish-wide. The presiding elder, with the approval of the bishop, may form a cooperative parish in any suitable ministry setting with the consent of the local churches concerned.

2. The cabinet may organize cooperative parishes and may create appropriate policies and procedures as fits their ministry context.

3. A cooperative parish or yoked parish may be formed with local churches of other denominations, provided that the doctrine and mission of the other denomination does not conflict with those of the Global Methodist Church. Such an ecumenical cooperative parish requires the approval of the appropriate judicatory body within which each local church is a member.

¶ **353. ECUMENICAL CONGREGATIONS.** 1. *Definition.* Ecumenical congregations may be formed by a local Global Methodist church and one or more local congregations of other Christian traditions, provided that the doctrine and mission of the other denomination does not conflict with those of the Global Methodist Church. Such congregations are formed to enhance ministry, make wise stewardship of limited resources, and live out the ecumenical spirit in creative ways responsive to the needs of God's people, as well as to opportunities for expanded mission and ministry. Forms of ecumenical shared ministries include: (a) a federated church, in which one congregation is related to two or more denominations, with persons choosing to hold membership in one or the other of the denominations; (b) a union church, in which a congregation with one unified membership roll is related to two or more denominations; (c) a merged church, in which two or more congregations of different denominations form one congregation that relates to only one of the constituent denominations; (d) a yoked parish, in which congregations of different denominations share a pastor (see ¶ 353.3).

2. *Covenanting.* Congregations forming an ecumenical congregation shall develop a clear covenant of mission, set of bylaws, or articles of agreement that address financial and property

matters, church membership, denominational support and apportionments, committee structure and election procedures, terms and provisions of the pastorate, reporting procedures, relationship with the parent denominations, and matters related to amending or dissolving the agreement.

Congregations shall notify the presiding elder of any amending of the covenant agreement and shall consult with the presiding elder prior to dissolving the covenant agreement.

3. *Connectional Responsibilities.* Cabinets, conference staff, and other leaders shall work with ecumenical congregations at their inception and to maintain ongoing avenues of vital relationship and connection to the denominational church, while recognizing that such avenues must also be maintained with the other denominational partners in that congregation.

Section XIII – Congregational Fidelity

¶ 354. **CONGREGATIONAL FIDELITY.** Central to the integrity of both local congregations and the Global Methodist Church as a whole, the doctrines and discipline of the denomination as outlined in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* shall be voluntarily and joyfully embraced and practiced by all. Additionally, local congregations covenant to provide connectional funding as set forth in ¶ 349. Congregations that for reason of conscience find themselves unable to do so are accordingly encouraged to affiliate with another Christian denomination more in keeping with their beliefs or practices or disaffiliate from the Global Methodist Church under the provisions of ¶ 903. Should a congregation consistently advance doctrines or engage in practices not in conformity with this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or fail to remit in full the connectional funding set forth in ¶ 349, the Transitional Leadership Council or its successor shall have the authority to effectuate such a change independently, provided that the following provisions are met:

1. If the current pastor of the congregation is promoting doctrines or practices contrary to those of the Global Methodist Church, the bishop shall remove the pastor and appoint a pastor who will promote and defend the doctrines and practices of the Global Methodist Church. The bishop shall then allow time for the new pastor to bring the congregation into conformity.

2. If step one proves unfruitful or the pastor is not contributing to the problem, the bishop and presiding elder shall meet with the church council (or its equivalent) or a larger group of the congregation to identify areas of disagreement over Global Methodist Church doctrines or practices, seeking a resolution of such disagreements and restoration of conformity by the local church. The bishop shall winsomely defend and teach the doctrines and practices of the Global Methodist Church in such engagements.

3. If the local congregation fails to remit its connectional funding in full as calculated annually, the presiding elder shall meet with the church council (or its equivalent) to encourage remittance.

4. If a resolution of the disagreement proves unattainable or the local church does not remit its connectional funding in full following the meeting with the presiding elder, the local church may be involuntarily disaffiliated from the Global Methodist Church by a two-thirds vote of the Transitional Leadership Council or its successor, by agreement of the bishop, and by an affirmative vote of the presiding elders of the conference in which the local church is located.

5. The congregation shall receive timely written notice of the involuntary disaffiliation and may appeal the decision to the Connectional Council on Appeals within sixty days, providing whatever explanations or other details to support their case. During the pendency of any appeal, the involuntary disaffiliation shall be stayed. The determination of the Connectional Council on Appeals shall be final. If no appeal occurs or if the involuntary disaffiliation is affirmed on appeal, the disaffiliation shall take effect immediately.

Section XIV. Transitional Provisions

¶ 355. LOCAL CONGREGATIONS ALIGNING WITH THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH.

1. Local congregations formerly aligned with The United Methodist Church may align with the Global Methodist Church through an affirmative vote by the professing members of the congregation present and voting at a duly authorized church conference. The church council shall notify the Transitional Leadership Council of their decision. The affirmative vote must be to endorse the doctrinal standards and Social Witness (¶¶ 101-202) in this *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines* and express a desire to be connected and accountable to this church.

2. Other Christian congregations who desire to be connected and accountable to the Global Methodist Church may request to align upon an affirmative majority vote of a congregational meeting to endorse the doctrinal standards and Social Witness (¶¶ 101-202) in this *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*. It is the responsibility of the Transitional Leadership Council to verify the legality of the process used by the local congregation and the congregation's viability prior to their request being approved.

3. The Transitional Leadership Council shall serve the local church by ensuring all congregations in the Global Methodist Church have: an annual conference and district to which they belong, appropriate supervision, pastoral appointments, and the opportunity to elect through its annual conference delegates to the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church. Congregations shall function in their annual conferences and districts under this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Beginning on the effective date of affiliation, local churches shall forward connectional funding to the Global Methodist Church under processes established by the Transitional Leadership Council.

4. Where both a local church and its pastor affiliate with the Global Methodist Church and both desire to continue the pastoral assignment, the Transitional Leadership Council and the bishop in charge will seek to maintain the current clergy appointment for the sake of stability and continuity in this time of transition.

5. The effective date of local churches under ¶ 355.1-3 shall be the date established by the Transitional Leadership Council.

PART FOUR THE MINISTRY OF THE CALLED

¶ **401. MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH.** 1. The church's ministry is derived from the ministry of Christ, who bids all people to receive salvation and follow Him as disciples in the way of love. This summons to ministry is to the whole people of God, or Laity (*laos*) who are "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession," charged to "declare the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness and into His wonderful light." (1 Peter 2:9) Baptism initiates this call to ministry, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

2. With the exception of the offices of bishop and presiding elder, which are reserved for elders, all Laity and Clergy may serve in various offices. Offices of ministry refer to what followers of Christ do for the general building up of the body of Christ. Offices include, but are not limited to, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, administrators, miracle workers, healers, and helpers (Eph. 4:11-13, and 1 Cor. 12:28). The Holy Spirit works in and through a call to ministry and the subsequent discernment and affirmation of that call by the church.

¶ **402. CERTIFIED LAY MINISTERS.** 1. A certified lay minister is a professing member of a local congregation who has received special training in Wesleyan doctrine and our denominational polity, and endorsement by the church in order to serve the church as laity. This category encompasses all those who were previously named certified lay servants, certified lay speakers, certified lay ministers, deaconesses, home missionaries, and lay missionaries. Certified lay ministers may work in any area of the church's ministry, including leading, teaching, proclaiming/preaching, evangelizing, worship, and caring ministry. As laity, a certified lay minister is not subject to the approval or appointment of the bishop or presiding elder, although they may request the lay minister serve in a ministry capacity outside his or her own local church.

2. Qualifications. Persons desiring to be certified lay ministers must fulfill the following qualifications:

a. Professing member of a local Global Methodist congregation (or its predecessor) for at least two years.

b. Satisfactory completion of a course in lay ministry, approved by the Commission on Higher Education and Ministry, covering the church's doctrine, history, polity, and basic Bible knowledge.

c. Satisfactory completion of at least one advanced course in lay ministry, approved by the Commission on Higher Education and Ministry, on an area of ministry (e.g., preaching, worship leading, caring ministry, etc.). Coursework or training in other settings may be counted to meet this requirement at the discretion of the board of ministry.

d. National background check.

e. Written recommendation by the pastor and endorsement by majority vote of the pastor-parish relations committee and the charge conference.

f. Interview and approval by the annual conference board of ministry. A public service of commitment recognizing the certification is recommended.

3. Renewal of Certification. Certification for lay ministry may be renewed every three years by the annual conference board of ministry based on the following:

a. An annual report to the charge conference and annual conference board of ministry outlining what ministry had been done during the year and giving evidence of satisfactory performance.

- b. Endorsement by majority vote of the charge conference annually.
- c. Written recommendation for renewal by the pastor.
- d. Completion of an additional national background check every three years
- e. Satisfactory completion of at least one additional advanced course in lay ministry, approved by the Commission on Ministry, in the last three years.

4. Conditions of service.

a. A certified lay minister serves as a volunteer, but an honorarium and expenses for pulpit supply or other specialized ministries outside one's own local church are appropriate. A certified lay minister serving as a lay staff member of a church or other ministry should be equitably compensated for their work.

b. Certification as a lay minister may be transferred to another annual conference if the person relocates. Subsequent renewal in that new annual conference is in accordance with ¶ 402.3.

c. Persons who held active certification in a predecessor denomination shall automatically be received as certified lay ministers in the Global Methodist Church, provided that they have met the requirements of ¶ 402.2b-c through coursework in the predecessor denomination, subscribe to the doctrinal standards and Social Witness of this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, and agree to abide by its discipline. Subsequent renewal is in accordance with ¶ 402.3. Those not meeting the requirements of ¶ 402.2b-c are not certified but may work toward certification and are not required to repeat coursework they have already completed.

¶ 403. ORDERS OF MINISTRY. Clergy are those who have been called out from among God's people for particular service to His church. A calling from God may take many expressions and come at any age in the life of an individual. Scripture bears witness to both the young (1 Samuel 3) and those who are older (Genesis 12 and Exodus 3) being summoned by God into His work, as well as men and women, and those whose encounters with God were sudden and dramatic and those whose call may have been more gradual, naturally unfolding over a period of many years. In addition to those specifically charged with preaching and teaching (I Peter 5:1-4), the early church also set apart seven disciples who were "full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom" to distribute food to the widows among them (Acts 6:1-6). Individuals such as Stephen, Phoebe, and Timothy, served in various ways to benefit the people of God. Whether a deacon or elder, all clergy are required to live lives of integrity and self-control as they hold fast to the mystery of faith (1 Tim. 3:1-13).

Following the historic practice of Methodism, those who serve as clergy within the Global Methodist Church shall be both elected by their peers and ordained by the bishop on behalf of the whole church. Election is the action by which the clergy of an annual conference, after carefully examining the qualifications, abilities, and readiness of a candidate for ministry, incorporate individuals into the membership of the covenant fellowship of those called to serve the church. Election carries with it the right to vote and participate in the business of an annual conference provided the person is under appointment or senior clergy who meet the qualifications of ¶ 418. During the period prior to the convening General Conference, under the provisions of ¶ 419.2a, transitional local pastors who have been approved for ordination as elders or deacons shall be clergy under this paragraph and have the right to vote and participate in the business of an annual conference. During the period prior to the convening General Conference, those persons licensed as transitional local pastors under ¶ 419.2b shall also be clergy under this paragraph and have the right to vote and participate in the business of an annual conference, except as limited by ¶ 419.2b. Ordination is the action by which the church sets apart those who have been so elected to a particular order of ministry for the good of the whole church. Ordination is conferred by the laying on of hands by a bishop and others among the people of God in conference. There are two orders of clergy:

1. *Order of Deacons.* Within the people of God, some persons are called to the ministry of deacon, which is a ministry of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice. The words deacon, deaconess, and diaconate all spring from a common Greek root—*diakonos*, or “servant,” and *diakonia*, or “service.” This ministry exemplifies and leads the Church in the servanthood every Christian is called to live both in the church and in the world. Deacons are to witness to the Word in their words and actions, and to embody and lead the community’s service in the world for the sake of enacting God’s compassion and justice. Within and beyond a local church, deacons may, among other ministries, lead in worship, preach and teach, conduct marriages, bury the dead, care for the sick and needy, and interpret the needs of the world to the church. Deacons may also consecrate or assist with the Sacraments in accordance with ¶ 313. Deacons may serve in a variety of offices within and beyond a local church, including, but not limited to, serving as pastor of a local church. Deacons retain their responsibility to witness and service in the world. Ordination as a deacon is for life, whether a person is subsequently ordained an elder or not; persons may remain as deacons should they desire to do so.

2. *Order of Elders.* From among those ordained as deacons, some are called to carry on the historic work of the *presbyteros* or elder in the life of the Church to the ministry of Word, Sacrament, and Order. (Those who were not ordained deacon prior to ordination as elder will be granted deacon’s orders upon beginning their service in the Global Methodist Church. It is recommended that annual conferences recognize this grant through a special service.) Those called to the ministry of elder bear authority and responsibility to proclaim God’s Word fearlessly, to teach God’s people faithfully, to administer the sacraments, and to order the life of the church so that it may be both faithful and fruitful. Elders retain their calling as Laity to witness and service in the world, as well as their call as deacons to word, service, compassion, and justice among the people of God.

¶ 404. TYPES OF ORDAINED MINISTRY. From its earliest days, Methodism was unique in its adoption of an itinerant ministry involving “circuit-riding preachers” who carried the Gospel and Wesleyan witness across numerous frontiers around the world. While the nature of itinerancy has changed over the decades according to the needs and circumstances of church and culture, it continues to be reflected in the appointment system of clergy who are willing and ready to serve wherever most needed. Within the Global Methodist Church, there are two types of ordered ministry: located ministry and the ministry of oversight (or apostolic ministry)

1. *Located Ministry.* Clergy appointed to serve in a particular place, such as the pastor of a local church or director of a social service agency, are part of the located ministry of the Global Methodist Church. They shall have that call affirmed and be appointed by the bishop over the annual conference wherein they serve, who shall also oversee their work. Clergy in located ministry may serve in a full-time, part-time, or bi-vocational capacity, or as a volunteer.

2. *The Ministry of Oversight (Apostolic Ministry).* Elders who are called and appointed to oversee the work of others are a part of the ministry of oversight or the apostolic ministry of the Global Methodist Church. Upon their election to the office, elders may serve as a bishop of the church to defend the faith and to provide oversight and discipline to the churches and clergy that compose the annual conference. In turn, bishops may call and appoint other elders as presiding elders to give guidance and direction to those serving as clergy within their district, organize new churches, and assist, discipline, and provide sacramental support to laity, deacons, and elders in located ministry.

¶ 405. BASIC QUALIFICATIONS OF THE ORDAINED. Those to be ordained must meet the following qualifications:

1. Have a personal faith in Jesus Christ and be committed to Christ as Savior and Lord.

2. Nurture and cultivate spiritual disciplines and patterns of holiness consistent with the *General Rules*, including responsible self-control by exhibiting personal habits that are conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all relationships, fidelity in a Christian marriage between one man and one woman, chastity in singleness, social responsibility, and the knowledge and love of God.

3. Have a call by God and the people of God to devote themselves to the work of ministry.

4. Be able to effectively communicate the Christian faith.

5. Give evidence of God's gifts for ordained ministry and promise of future usefulness in the mission of the church.

6. Accept the authority of Scripture; be competent in the disciplines of Scripture, theology, church history and polity; possess the skills essential for the practice of ministry, and lead in making disciples of Jesus Christ.

7. Be accountable to the church, accept its doctrinal standards, discipline, and authority, accept the supervision of those appointed to the ministry of oversight, and live in covenant with its ordained ministers.

¶ 406. ENTRANCE INTO ORDAINED MINISTRY. 1. Persons who hear a call to ordained ministry should meet with their local pastor or presiding elder to inquire about candidacy. They must have held membership in a local Global Methodist church (or its predecessor) for at least one year and have a secondary school diploma or equivalent. Upon recommendation by two-thirds secret ballot of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee or equivalent, the person is presented to the charge conference for a vote by simple majority on whether to approve them for candidacy.

2. *Candidacy Discernment.* After local church approval, the candidate shall spend a minimum of six months under the supervision of the annual conference board of ministry in discernment, which must include a supervised internship or employment in a ministry setting. During this time, the candidate shall:

a. Engage in discernment, including but not limited to, completion of a guidebook, mentoring, and participation in a small group with other candidates;

b. Undergo a psychological evaluation, and background and credit check; and

c. Upon completion of the the minimum of six months of discernment, the candidate shall write a formal statement detailing his or her call to ordained ministry and submit it to the annual conference board of ministry.

3. The annual conference board of ministry, or subgroup thereof, shall interview the candidate and the annual conference board of ministry shall then vote on whether to certify the candidate by majority vote.

4. A certified candidate must undergo a period of spiritual formation under the supervision of the annual conference board of ministry until such time as the person is ordained a deacon.

¶ 407. EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ORDINATION. 1. In order better to prepare leaders, the Global Methodist Church requires candidates for ordination as deacons and elders to fulfill basic educational requirements as part of the ordination process. These educational requirements include the courses defined in ¶ 407.3.a, and .b below: Ten courses (thirty credit hours) for those pursuing deacons orders, and ten additional courses (thirty credit hours) for those seeking elders orders. Recognizing that educational opportunities vary based on geography and life circumstance, the Global Methodist Church will accept courses, singly or in combination, from any of the following degree programs, so long as the required courses are successfully completed for the level of ordination being pursued: an approved alternative educational pathway, a bachelor's degree program in ministry (for persons residing other than in the United States and Western Europe), a

joint Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Divinity program, a program for a Master of Arts or equivalent degree in the practice of ministry, or a Master of Divinity degree program.

2. *Recommended Educational Institutions.* A recommended list of schools for ministry education will be maintained by the Commission on Ministry. Candidates for ordination are strongly encouraged to choose from the list of recommended institutions to complete educational requirements for ordination; however, candidates may complete their educational requirements at any accredited educational institution, including institutions not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list. The Commission on Ministry must approve courses to fulfill the educational requirement for Methodist Theology and Denominational History and Polity. The Commission on Ministry will recommend competencies and courses for ministerial training, as well as establish standards for and supervise approved alternative educational pathways in conjunction with the annual conference boards of ministry.

3. *Deacons Educational Requirements.* A total of ten courses (30 credit hours) are required for those ordained as deacons.

a. Courses in the following five areas are required for all persons seeking ordination as a deacon:

- Introduction to the Old Testament
- Introduction to the New Testament
- Christian Leadership/Conflict Resolution
- Methodist Theology
- Denominational History and Polity

In addition, those pastoring a church, or planning to pursue elder's orders shall be required to complete a course in

- Basics of Preaching.

b. Once a deacon has been ordained, a minimum of five further (four for those going on to ordination as an elder) courses will be required. Deacons may choose from courses in the following areas:

- Pastoral Care*
- Worship and Sacraments*
- Apologetics*
- Evangelism and Missions*
- The Gospel Vision for Justice
- Christian Education & Discipleship
- Ministering to Children
- Models of Youth Ministry
- Church Finance and Administration
- Ministry in Intercultural Contexts
- Additional courses in Bible or theology

** required for deacons pastoring a local church/ planning to pursue elder's orders*

These courses will be determined in consultation with the presiding elder in consideration of the deacon's ministry setting. Failure to complete these additional courses within seven years will result in the deacon being placed on inactive status until the courses are completed.

4. *Elders Educational Requirements.* For deacons who wish to pursue elder's orders, a minimum of ten additional courses (beyond the ten already taken for ordination as deacon) will be required.

a. In addition to all courses required for the office of deacon, courses in the following six courses will be required prior to ordination as an elder.

- History of Christianity through the Reformation
- History of Christianity, Reformation to the present
- Church Finance and Administration (if not already taken)
- Systematic Theology
- One elective course in Old Testament
- One elective course in New Testament

b. Following ordination as an elder, courses in additional four areas will be required to complete the educational requirements. These courses may be chosen from among the following areas:

- A Theology Elective
- Mission and Church Renewal
- Media and Modern Applications
- Advanced Preaching
- Spiritual Formation
- Philosophy of Religion

c. Failure to complete these additional courses within seven years will result in the elder being placed on inactive status until the courses are completed.

5. The Commission on Ministry and Higher Education will determine whether courses at a given institution meet the requirements listed in this paragraph. Each annual conference board of ministry shall certify that the courses taken by a person correspond sufficiently to these areas.

¶ **408. HISTORIC QUESTIONS.** In addition to whatever other questions may be asked, persons seeking ordination as deacon shall be evaluated during their interview by the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent based upon their answers related to the following historic questions first asked about those desiring to be "traveling preachers":

"(1) Do they know God as pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?

(2) Have they gifts, as well as evidence of God's grace, for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

(3) Have they fruit? Have any been truly convinced of sin and converted to God, and are believers edified by their service?

As long as these marks occur in them, we believe that they are called of God to serve. These we receive as sufficient proof that they are moved by the Holy Spirit."

Prior to ordination as elder, candidates shall provide the board of ministry with written answers to the following questions historically asked by bishops since the time of John Wesley:

(1) Have you faith in Christ?

(2) Are you going on to perfection?

(3) Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life?

(4) Are you earnestly striving after perfection in love?

(5) Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and to God's work?

(6) Do you know the General Rules of our Church?

- (7) *Will you keep the General Rules of our Church?*
- (8) *Have you studied the doctrines of the Global Methodist Church?*
- (9) *After full examination do you believe that our doctrines are in harmony with the Holy Scriptures?*
- (10) *Will you preach and maintain them?*
- (11) *Have you studied our form of church discipline and polity?*
- (12) *Do you approve our church government and polity?*
- (13) *Will you support and maintain them?*
- (14) *Will you exercise the ministry of compassion?*
- (15) *Will you diligently instruct the children in every place?*
- (16) *Will you visit from house to house?*
- (17) *Will you recommend fasting or abstinence, both by precept and example?*
- (18) *Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God?*
- (19) *Are you in debt so as to embarrass you in your work?*
- (20) *Will you observe the following directions?*
 - (a) *Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never trifle away time; neither spend any more time at any one place than is strictly necessary.*
 - (b) *Be punctual. Do everything exactly at the time. And do not mend our rules, but keep them; not for wrath, but for conscience' sake.*

¶ 409. ORDINATION AS DEACON. Within the Global Methodist Church, certified candidates must first be ordained as deacons and, after ordination as deacons, may be ordained as elders.

1. *Ordination Questions.* Upon completion of the educational requirements of ¶ 406.2b and ¶ 407.3a, and passing a deacon's level knowledge examination in doctrine, history, discipline, and Bible, a candidate for ordination as deacon shall be interviewed by the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. During such interview, the candidate shall be asked the following questions:

- (a) *What is your personal experience of God?*
- (b) *What is your understanding of evil?*
- (c) *What is your understanding of grace?*
- (d) *How do you understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers and in the Church?*
- (e) *What is your understanding of the Kingdom of God?*
- (f) *What significance do you believe that the resurrection holds?*
- (g) *What is your understanding of the nature and authority of Scripture?*
- (h) *What is your understanding of the nature and mission of the Church?*
- (i) *What gifts and graces do you bring to the work of ministry?*
- (j) *What is the meaning of ordination?*
- (k) *What is the role and significance of the sacraments?*
- (l) *Have you studied our form of church discipline and polity and will you support and maintain it?*
- (m) *For the sake of the church's witness, are you willing to dedicate yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life, exercising self-control in your personal habits, integrity in all of your relationships and if married, fidelity in your covenant with your spouse, or if single, chastity in your personal conduct?*

In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church.

The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church.

2. The annual conference board of ministry or equivalent will interview the candidate for readiness for ordination as a deacon. After being interviewed and recommended by the annual conference board of ministry by a two-thirds vote and approved by a two-thirds vote of the clergy of the annual conference in executive session and by the bishop, a certified candidate shall become a full member of the annual conference and be ordained as deacon by the bishop through the laying on of hands.

3. Deacons are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters except the ordination and conference relation of elders. Deacons not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall have no voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418.

4. Deacons may be appointed to serve as part of a ministry team in a local church (including as a pastor) or another ministry setting by the bishop, or they may secure their own position with the approval and appointment of the bishop. Deacons may continue to serve as a deacon indefinitely under appointment by the bishop and are encouraged to continue their education in regard to whatever ministry specialty they are called to pursue.

5. Deacons shall meet minimum educational requirements at the time of ordination as determined by this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (¶ 406.2b, c). Following ordination, deacons must fulfill the additional educational requirements established for deacons in ¶ 407.3b within seven (7) years. Deacons who do not complete all educational requirements within the allotted time shall be classified as inactive until such educational requirements are completed.

6. Deacons considering a call to ordination as an elder, or in whom the gifts and graces for the ministry of elder are recognized by a bishop or presiding elder, may be appointed to the office of pastor in a local church. If such an appointment is more than a temporary assignment, a deacon who accepts such an appointment must declare candidacy for ordination as an elder and begin the process toward such ordination following the completion of all educational requirements as a deacon.

¶ 410. ORDINATION AS ELDER. 1. Deacons who desire to be ordained as an elder shall declare their candidacy for such ordination to the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. They shall be eligible for ordination as elder once they:

a. Prove themselves faithful, mature, and effective over a period of a minimum of two years' service as a deacon;

b. Complete the educational requirements for ordination as an elder specified in ¶ 407.4a.

c. Pass an advanced level examination in doctrine, history, discipline and Bible;

d. Be interviewed and recommended by a two-thirds vote of the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent for ordination as an elder. In evaluating candidates who attend an educational institution not on the Global Methodist Church's recommended list, the annual conference board of ministry will evaluate whether the candidate's courses and preparation meets the standards of the Global Methodist Church. The annual conference board of ministry shall evaluate whether the candidate evidences a sufficient foundation in and commitment to the doctrine, ethical principles, and discipline of the Global Methodist Church; and

e. Be approved by two-thirds vote by the elders of the annual conference in executive session and be approved by the bishop.

2. The additional educational requirements specified in ¶ 407.4b must be completed within seven (7) years of ordination as elder. Persons who do not complete such requirements in a timely manner shall be ineligible thereafter to serve in the office of pastor of a local church but may continue to serve in other capacities as a deacon.

3. Elders are clergy members in full connection of the annual conference with full voice and vote on all matters. An elder not serving under appointment shall be classified as inactive and shall not have voting rights in the annual conference, except as provided for in ¶ 418. Elders may be appointed by the bishop as a presiding elder, to local ministry as pastor in charge, to the staff of a local church, as a chaplain, as an evangelist, or to other ministry settings. Elders are eligible to be elected to the office of bishop.

¶ 411. MINISTERIAL TRAINING FUND. A fund shall be maintained for ministerial education by the Transitional Leadership Council. Once certified, a candidate may request a loan to assist with educational requirements. A service commitment of five years duration after ordination is required of any clergy who receives such assistance, with twenty percent of the loan amount forgiven for each year of ministry within the Global Methodist Church.

¶ 412. STUDENT PASTOR.

1. Upon approval of a conference board of ministry, a bishop may appoint individuals who are candidates for ordination as per ¶ 406 to serve as a student pastor within the Global Methodist Church. It shall be the responsibility of the conference board of ministry to assign an elder to provide mentoring to that person.

2. In recognition of the scriptural principle of the “priesthood of all believers,” and in order to provide the means of grace for the spiritual needs of those within all of our churches, after a Student Pastor completes a training by the annual conference board of ministry on the theology and practice of the sacraments in the Global Methodist Church, he or she may preside over the sacraments of baptism and holy communion under the direction of the Presiding Elder or another elder appointed by the Presiding Elder. The Presiding Elder may assign the supply pastors candidacy mentor to this role where appropriate. The board of ministry may consider any courses taken in the theology of the sacraments within the Methodist tradition as meeting the requirement of the training.

3. A student pastor must be ordained as a deacon within five total years of their appointed service in that role. Candidates for ordination who fail to meet the educational requirements as defined in this paragraph will be discontinued as student pastors.

4. Student pastors are clergy members of the annual conference with full voice, but not vote, on all matters.

¶ 413. CHAPLAINCY AND OTHER ENDORSEMENTS. The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint a provisional ecclesiastical endorsing board that shall report to the TLC to fulfill the following ministry objectives and requirements: (1) evaluate applications and recommend persons to specialized ministries that require a denominational endorsement, (2) provide professional and pastoral support and accountability by those appointed to serve in chaplaincy/institutional ministry settings, (3) interpret and advocate for those serving such appointments to bishops, annual conferences and local congregations, (4) work to identify quality continuing education opportunities for those appointed to endorsed ministries, and (5) liaison with other faith groups, chaplaincy organizations, colleges, theological seminaries and conferences to share the vision and opportunities for boundary ministries in institutional and secular settings. In its discretion, the Transitional Leadership Council may select a Director of Endorsing Ministries to oversee ongoing completion of the objectives listed above. The Director shall work with the Transitional Leadership Council to establish necessary funding, implementing policies, and logistical support. The Director shall be ultimately accountable to the Transitional Leadership Council and shall work in close collaboration with the ecclesiastical endorsing board on all matters relevant to the effective discharge of responsibilities.

¶ 414. **EVANGELISTS.** The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint a provisional endorsing board to encourage the work of evangelists in the Global Methodist Church that shall report to the TLC to fulfill the following ministry objectives and requirements: (1) evaluate applications and recommend persons to the ministry and office of evangelist, (2) provide professional and pastoral support and accountability by those appointed to serve in evangelistic ministry settings, (3) interpret and advocate for those serving such appointments to bishops, annual conferences, and local congregations, (4) work to identify quality continuing education opportunities for those appointed as evangelists, and (5) liaison with other faith groups, evangelistic organizations, colleges, theological seminaries and conferences to share the vision and opportunities for evangelists.

¶ 415. **TRANSFER OF CLERGY CREDENTIALS.** Clergy applying to transfer to the Global Methodist Church from another Christian denomination (except for those specified in ¶ 419) must provide the following: (1) A formal resume with references; (2) Proof of ordination from a denomination with a formalized vetting process. Ordinations by congregations, networks, or associations do not meet this requirement; (3) Official transcripts of all post high school education; and (4) a copy of all personnel files maintained by his or her former denomination to be sent to the board of ministry at the written request of the clergy person. The applicant must also: (1) Submit to a background and credit check, and psychological examination, (2) Interview with a presiding elder, (3) pass denominational exams on doctrine, history, polity, and Bible for their level of ordination, and (4) Interview with the annual conference board of ministry or equivalent. Upon the completion of these requirements, transfers must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the annual conference board of ministry, a two-thirds vote of the clergy session of the annual conference to which the applicant is seeking admittance, and by, the receiving bishop.

¶ 416. **APPOINTMENT OF CLERGY FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS.**

1. Upon recommendation of the board of ministry and affirmation by the clergy session of the annual conference, a bishop may appoint clergy in good standing in other Christian denominations to serve appointments or ecumenical ministries while retaining their denominational affiliation. Their appointment shall be as a **Valid Deacon** or **Valid Elder**. Clergypersons retaining their affiliation with other denominations while receiving appointment in the Global Methodist Church shall meet the following criteria:

- a. Complete an application prepared by the Board of Ordained Ministry, including the following:
 - i) Testimony to their Christian faith and call to ministry.
 - ii) Permission and Release of any required psychological tests, a criminal background and credit check, reports of sexual misconduct or child abuse.
 - iii) Either a notarized statement certifying that the candidate has not been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor or accused in writing of sexual misconduct or child abuse, OR a notarized statement detailing any convictions for felony or misdemeanor or written accusations of sexual misconduct or child abuse.
- b. A statement agreeing to teach, support and maintain Global Methodist Church doctrine.
- c. Give evidence through an interview with the board of ministry that they have read the *Book of Doctrine and Discipline* and will support and maintain Global Methodist Church discipline and polity.
- d. Present suitable credentials as an ordained clergyperson from another Christian denomination,

e. Present evidence of completion of education equivalent to that required for deacons in the Global Methodist Church. Clergypersons holding ordination from another denomination or congregation, but not meeting the required educational standards of the Global Methodist Church may be appointed provisionally, with full educational requirements for deacon to be completed within three years of the start of the appointment. Progress toward completion of educational requirements shall be shown annually.

2. Clergy affirmed as Valid Deacons or Valid Elders may be accorded the right to vote in the annual conference on all matters except the following: a) constitutional amendments; b) election of delegates to General, regional, or annual conferences; and c) all matters of ordination character, and conference relations of ministers. Valid Deacons and Valid Elders may serve on any board, commission or committee of the annual conference, except the board of ministry and the board of trustees. Valid Deacons and Valid Elders may not be elected as delegates to General, regional or annual conferences.

3. Between conference sessions, the board of ministry may approve such persons for appointment pending their approval at the next regular clergy session of the annual conference. The bishop may make *ad interim* appointments of such persons once approved by the board of ministry. In every case, prior examination and on-going review shall be made of such person's understanding, acceptance, and willingness to support and maintain the doctrine, discipline, and polity of the Global Methodist Church.

¶ 417. LEAVES OF ABSENCE. A change in conference status may be affected by the following:

1. *Voluntary Leave Process.* Clergy may request in writing a voluntary temporary leave of absence of up to one year from their ministerial duties due to medical needs, family circumstances, or other personal issues. Transitional leaves may similarly be granted for clergy in good standing who are temporarily between appointments. Such a change in conference status may be granted or terminated by majority vote of the clergy members of the annual conference upon recommendation by two-thirds of the annual conference board of ministry. Between sessions of annual conference, a voluntary leave of absence may be granted or terminated by a two-thirds vote of the board of ministry, with the recommendation of the bishop and a two-thirds majority of the presiding elders. Renewal of voluntary leave may be made annually by the majority vote of the clergy session, for a period of up to five years. After that time, the clergy person must choose either honorable location status (¶ 417.7) or senior status (¶ 418), with the approval of a majority of the clergy session. Either status discontinues the person's eligibility for appointment and does not require annual renewal of status.

2. *Voluntary Leave Conditions.* Clergypersons on voluntary leave shall have no claim on conference funds but may be eligible to continue in conference health programs through their own contributions. They may serve on annual conference commissions, committees, or boards, as well as vote for clergy delegates to General or Regional Conferences. Persons on voluntary leave of six months or longer are considered inactive and, except for election of clergy delegates, do not have vote at the annual conference. However, they do remain members of the annual conference with voice. They may continue to engage in part-time, unpaid ministry as a volunteer. Those on voluntary leave shall continue to be amenable to the annual conference for their conduct and the performance of ministry.

3. *Sabbatical Leave.* Clergy who have been serving in a full-time appointment for six consecutive years may be granted sabbatical leave for a program of study, travel, or renewal. Sabbatical leaves of three months or less may be granted by the pastor-parish relations committee, with the approval of the presiding elder. A longer sabbatical leave of up to one year must be approved by the conference board of ministry. Compensation for the clergy during a sabbatical of

three months or less shall be continued by the local church. Longer sabbaticals shall be the responsibility of the individuals involved, though the support of congregations and others is encouraged.

4. *Involuntary Leave Process.* Involuntary leaves may be requested by the bishop, two-thirds of the presiding elders, and a two-thirds vote of the annual conference board of ministry. The board shall also determine what if any disciplinary action or other conditions are required (e.g., therapy, remedial education, etc.). Placing a person on involuntary leave shall require a two-thirds vote of the clergy members meeting in executive session. The fair process for administrative hearings shall be followed in any involuntary leave procedure (§ 814). When an end to the involuntary leave of absence is initiated by the bishop and a two-thirds majority of the presiding elders, the annual conference board of ministry shall review the circumstances surrounding the granting of the status to determine if the conditions of the leave have been met. If the board determines that such is not the case, it may continue involuntary leave of absence. Involuntary leave may continue for up to five years from when it was first granted, at which time the board must pursue administrative location (§ 417.7). Termination of involuntary leave shall require a two-thirds vote of the board of ministry and a two-thirds vote of the clergy members meeting in executive session.

5. *Involuntary Leave Conditions.* Clergypersons on involuntary leave shall have no claim on annual conference funds and the conference shall assume no responsibility for salary, pension, or other benefits during the leave of absence, but the clergyperson may be eligible to continue in conference health programs through their own contributions. Clergy on involuntary leave shall not participate in the commissions, committees, or boards of the district or annual conference. They shall be in the inactive status, with no voice or vote at annual conference, may not be delegates to General Conference, and may not vote for clergy delegates. Those on involuntary leave shall continue to be amenable to the annual conference for their conduct and shall not participate in any official acts of ministry during the leave.

6. *Maternity and Paternity Leave.* Any clergy member (including both spouses in a clergy couple) may request maternity or paternity leave for up to three months or for such time as mandated by the law of the jurisdiction where the church is located, whichever is greater, at the birth or arrival of a child into the home for purposes of adoption or fostering. Such leave shall be granted by the pastor-parish relations committee in consultation with the presiding elder. During the leave, the clergyperson's annual conference status will remain unchanged, and the health and benefit plans will remain in force. Compensation, which may include sick leave, vacation, or other time off, shall be provided by the salary-paying unit for an amount of time determined by the church or in accordance with the law of the jurisdiction where the church served is located, whichever is greater.

7. *Honorable or Administrative Location.* Persons who have been placed on honorable location (with consent) or administrative location (without consent, JPP 2.2c and 3) are no longer members of the annual conference. They shall not have voice or vote at the annual conference unless specifically granted voice by the annual conference. Their membership shall be held in a local church of their choice, with the written consent of the pastor in charge and, in the case of administrative location, the pastor-parish relations committee. Any ministerial service is limited to the church/charge where they hold membership and must be only with the written consent of the pastor in charge.

¶ 418. SENIOR STATUS. Following the scriptural pattern, there is no retirement for clergy or laity from the work of God's Kingdom. However, clergy persons serving in appointments may choose senior status within the annual conference, with the approval of a majority of the board of ministry and a majority of the clergy session. There is no mandatory age for such status. Senior status releases clergy members from any obligation to accept an appointment to ministry from the bishop, though

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clergy in senior status may voluntarily accept an appointment from the bishop to any ministry setting for which they qualify. Senior clergy, including bishop emeriti, retain their active status and right to both voice and vote at annual conference if they fulfill either of the following conditions: a) they are within seven years of the effective date of their aligning with the Global Methodist Church or the end of their last appointment, whichever is later, provided that they notify the conference secretary at least ninety days prior to the annual conference session of their intention to participate as a voting member, or b) they are under appointment by the bishop for at least one-quarter time (no notification necessary). Senior clergy not qualifying under the preceding sentence retain voice, but not vote, at annual conference. Those in senior status, whether active or inactive, may be elected as a delegate to General or Regional Conference and serve on district or annual conference commissions, committees, or boards.

¶ 419. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.

1. Clergy who are current or former ordained members of The United Methodist Church may apply to the Transitional Leadership Council (¶ 703.2h) or a body that it designates to be received as clergy members of the Global Methodist Church and to have their ordained status recognized. The application shall be accompanied by a copy of the applicant's ordination certificate(s) and shall include an explicit affirmation of the doctrines and Social Witness set forth in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and an agreement to abide by its discipline. The applicant shall consent to a background check. The Transitional Leadership Council or the body it designates, shall review the application and vote on each application received. An affirmative vote on each application shall result in the applicant being admitted to clergy membership in the Global Methodist Church and recognition of the applicant's ordained status in the Global Methodist Church.

2. Current or Former Associate Members and Licensed Local Pastors in The United Methodist Church.

a. Persons who are current or former associate members or licensed local pastors in The United Methodist Church may apply for clergy membership in the Global Methodist Church and to be ordained as a deacon or elder. Each application shall be evaluated by the Transitional Leadership Council body(ies) designated for that purpose. The application must include a copy of the certificate or license from the person's service in The United Methodist Church, a transcript of courses completed to meet the requirements of ¶ 407, and a declaration that the applicant affirms the doctrines and Social Witness set forth in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, agrees to abide by its discipline. Those meeting the qualifications for ordination as deacons or elders set forth in this chapter shall, with the approval of the Transitional Leadership Council or the body(ies) designated by it be ordained at a service convened for that purpose. If an associate member or a licensed local pastor meets the educational requirements to be ordained as an elder and has served in The United Methodist Church for at least two years, the two-year period of minimum service as a deacon in ¶ 410.1.a shall not be applicable and the person shall immediately be ordained as a deacon and then as an elder at the same annual conference session following approval by its clergy session.

b. Those current or former licensed local pastors in The United Methodist Church not meeting the qualifications for ordination as a deacon or elder in the Global Methodist Church may be granted a license by action of the Transitional Leadership Council as a local pastor for a one-year term, renewable for two additional years by the board of ministry of the annual conference in which they are appointed, while they work toward meeting the qualifications for ordination as a deacon in the Global Methodist Church, provided that they are appointed to pastor a local church. After the second renewal of the license, if the person has not met the qualifications for ordination as a deacon, their authority to pastor a local church shall cease. The license shall terminate if the person ceases to

be appointed as pastor of a local church. The clergy status as a local pastor under this paragraph is limited to the circumstances described here, is transitional in nature, and shall cease to exist following the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church. A pastor operating under a license granted under this provision shall be a clergy member of the Global Methodist Church while licensed, shall have sacramental authority in their appointment, and shall have full voice and vote on all matters except the ordination and conference relations of deacons and elders. Such a person shall be under the supervision of the board of ministry of the annual conference in which they are appointed, and a supervising elder appointed by a president elder, a president pro tem, or a bishop.

3. Clergy will be placed in the annual conference in which their appointment is located or may transfer to a different annual conference in the connection. The clergy person will be subject to the bishop of that annual conference for appointment. Prior to the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church, it is expected that the appointments of clergy serving congregations in which both transition into the Global Methodist Church will be retained, unless a change is needed because of illness, family situation, death, the election of senior status, clergy misconduct, or the financial exigencies of the congregation.

4. Persons in the candidacy process in The United Methodist Church who desire to affiliate with the Global Methodist Church prior to its convening conference shall be received by the annual conference board of ministry or the Transitional Leadership Council designated body handling candidates. The candidate shall comply with the provisions of ¶ 406 and their membership in a congregation of The United Methodist Church for at least one year shall satisfy the membership requirement of ¶ 406. The candidate shall request that a copy of all candidacy files held by their former district or annual conference be forwarded to the body credentialing candidates. Candidates shall continue at the point in the process where they are in The United Methodist Church. Candidates will not need to repeat steps or requirements they have already completed. Candidates will continue in their candidacy process according to the requirements listed in this chapter. Candidates eligible to be ordained under the qualifications of this chapter may move toward ordination at the next annual conference session under the processes laid out in this chapter.

5. The Transitional Leadership Council or its designee may in its sole discretion grant exceptions to the requirements upon petition of a person seeking certification as a candidate or conference membership and ordination during the period preceding the convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church.

PART FIVE THE SUPERINTENDENCY

¶ **501. THE NATURE OF SUPERINTENDENCY.** From apostolic times, certain ordained persons have been set apart and entrusted with the task of defending the Apostolic faith and overseeing and leading the church in its mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ and to spread scriptural holiness across the world (¶ 301). While shared by the whole people of God, this apostolic task is most clearly expressed in the historic office of the *episkopos* (meaning overseer) or bishop. The Global Methodist Church is led, equipped, and supervised by an episcopacy modeled after that of the early centuries of Christianity and stemming from the historic line of Methodist bishops.

We share John Wesley's conviction that bishops and elders are part of the same New Testament order. Therefore, bishops in the Global Methodist Church represent a specialized ministry rather than a separate order and are consecrated rather than ordained to their office. The role of bishop is a sacred trust held for a time as the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of our church allows. It is not a lifelong office.

Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, the first Methodist bishops in America, exemplified an evangelistic and missionary spirit that we trust will be shared by every bishop in the Global Methodist Church. The episcopal office is to keep us relentlessly focused outward toward our mission field. Our bishops must not lean on the trappings of ecclesial office but lead us from an authentic, humble, and evangelistic love for God and neighbor.

The bishop's primary place of servant leadership shall be to an annual conference or conferences of our church. When convened together, the bishops of the Global Methodist Church comprise a general superintendency that leads our church in spiritual and temporal matters. In addition to residing in the office of bishop, the task of superintending in the Global Methodist Church extends to the presiding elder, with each possessing distinct and collegial responsibilities.

Section I. The Office of Bishop

¶ **502. ROLE AND QUALIFICATIONS.** Bishops are elected from among those within the order of elders and set apart for a ministry of visionary servant leadership, general oversight, and supervision in support of the Church in its mission. As followers of Jesus Christ, bishops are charged with guarding the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Church. The basis of such discipleship of leadership lies in a life characterized by personal integrity, spiritual disciplines, and the anointing and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Bishops shall be persons of genuine faith, upstanding moral character, and possess the gift of encouragement, a vital and renewing spirit, and possess an engaging vision for the church. Candidates for the episcopacy should also have a strong record of effectiveness in leading the church in evangelism, discipleship, and mission, and shall be unwaveringly committed to uphold the doctrines and polity of our church, able and committed to effectively teach and communicate the historic Christian faith from a Wesleyan perspective. (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3; 1 Timothy 3:1-7)

¶ **503. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.** As general superintendents of the Church, bishops are entrusted with the following responsibilities:

1. Lead and oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Global Methodist Church which confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and particularly to lead the Church in its mission of witness and service in the world.

2. Guard, transmit, teach, and proclaim, corporately and individually, the apostolic faith as it is expressed in Scripture and tradition from a Wesleyan perspective.
3. Defend, communicate, uphold and enforce the order, doctrines and disciplines of the church as provided for in this *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*.
4. Preside in the General, regional, and annual conferences as assigned.
5. Consecrate bishops; ordain elders and deacons; and commission missionaries; entering the names of those individuals into the appropriate records and furnishing proper credentials to each. As these services are acts of the whole Church, text and rubrics shall be used in the form approved by the General Conference.
6. Promote, support, and model generous Christian giving, with special attention to teaching the biblical principles of giving.
7. Provide liaison and leadership in the quest for Christian unity in ministry and mission and in the search for strengthened relationships with other living faith communities.
8. Promote and support the evangelistic witness of the whole Church.
9. Travel through the connection at large to implement the missional strategy of the Global Methodist Church and to foster relationships with other areas of the connection.

¶ 504. SPECIFIC RESIDENTIAL DUTIES. Within the life of the annual conference to which they are assigned, bishops are entrusted with the following responsibilities:

1. Work with annual conference leaders to set vision and build a clear and articulated missional strategy for the conference. This strategy should include action plans and benchmarks aimed at advancing the Kingdom of Christ through initiatives related to establishing new faith communities, growing vital congregations, making mature disciples of Jesus Christ, and serving in ministries of justice and mercy.
2. Encourage, inspire and motivate the clergy, laity, and churches of the annual conference to embrace and implement the vision and missional strategy of the annual conference, as well as the vision and mission of the Global Methodist Church.
3. Strengthen the local churches, giving spiritual leadership to both laity and clergy, and to build relationships with people of local congregations of the episcopal area.
4. Provide general oversight for the fiscal and program operations of the annual conference(s). This oversight may include special inquiry into the work of annual conference committees and agencies to ensure that the provisions of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and annual conference and general church policies and procedures are followed.
5. Ensure fair process for clergy and laity in all involuntary administrative and judicial proceedings through monitoring the performance of annual conference officials, boards, and committees charged with implementing such procedures (see Part Nine).
6. Form the districts after consultation with the presiding elders and after a vote of the annual conference has determined the number of districts.
7. Appoint the presiding elders. To convene together and supervise the presiding elders and conference officers, which shall constitute the cabinet of the annual conference (¶ 507).
8. Make and fix the appointments in the annual conferences as the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* directs (¶ 508-513).
9. Divide or to unite a circuit(s), station(s), or mission(s) as judged necessary for missional strategy and then to make appropriate appointments.
10. Transfer, upon the request of the receiving bishop, clergy member(s) of one annual conference to another, provided said member(s) agrees to said transfer; and to send immediately to the secretaries of both conferences involved, to the conference Boards of Ministry, and to Transitional Leadership Council or its designee, written notices of the transfer of members.

11. Ensure that an appropriate personnel and supervisory record is kept and maintained on all clergy members as required by the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or action of the annual conference or bishop. There shall be only one file maintained for each member, containing both personnel and supervisory information. Clergy shall have access to the entirety of their file and shall have the right to add a response to any information contained therein.

12. Discharge such other duties as the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* may direct.

¶ 505. COMPENSATION AND SALARY UNIT. 1. The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, and travel and office expenses for bishops serving within the United States shall lie with the annual conference(s) to which he or she has been assigned. Bishops will be considered as employees of their respective annual conference(s). The Transitional Leadership Council will establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living and the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area.

2. The responsibility for providing appropriate compensation, health insurance, pension contributions, and travel and office expenses for bishops serving in an episcopal area outside of the United States shall be borne by the general church through partnerships with U.S. annual conferences, though such bishops shall be considered employees of some entity within their episcopal area. The Transitional Leadership Council will establish compensation amounts, adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living, the average salary of pastors in the episcopal area, and the currency exchange rate.

3. Each episcopal area within the United States shall partner with one or more episcopal areas elsewhere in the world to provide the necessary funds for the episcopal office within those areas. Such funds will be raised in the U.S. and passed through the general church, designated for that episcopal area. The Transitional Leadership Council shall arrange such partnerships based on the financial resources any given U.S. conference can reasonably provide. Where partnerships do not provide adequate resources to cover the episcopal office costs, general church connectional funding may be used to fund episcopal costs as needed.

4. Costs for episcopal travel outside the episcopal area on behalf of the general church, (e.g., Council of Bishops meetings) shall be paid out of general church funds, not conference partnership funds.

Section II. The Office of Presiding Elders

¶ 506. SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT. 1. Presiding elders are elders in full connection appointed by the bishop to the cabinet as an extension of the superintending role of the bishop within the annual conference. They serve at the bishop's pleasure and for a specific term of years to be determined by the General Conference. In instances where a new provisional annual conference is formed, the bishop shall consult with clergy and lay leaders of the provisional conference for the purpose of selecting presiding elders.

2. In the selection of presiding elders, bishops shall give due consideration to the inclusiveness of the Global Methodist Church (¶ 306).

¶ 507. RESPONSIBILITIES. 1. As an extension of the office of bishop, the presiding elder shall oversee the total ministry of the clergy and churches in the communities of the district in their missions of witness and service in the world. The presiding elder is the acting administrator of any pastoral charge in which a pastoral vacancy may develop, or where no pastor is appointed. As such, the presiding elder has the following specific responsibilities:

2. Be the chief missional strategist of the district and be committed to living out the values of the Church, including a mandate of inclusiveness; model, teach, and promote generous Christian giving; cooperate in developing Christian unity, and ecumenical, multicultural, multiracial, and

cooperative ministries; and work with persons across the Church to develop programs of ministry and mission that extend the witness of Christ into the world.

3. Along with the bishop, guard, transmit, teach, and proclaim, corporately and individually, the apostolic faith as it is expressed in Scripture and tradition from a Wesleyan perspective, communicating and defending the doctrines and discipline of the church as provided for in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

4. Work with the bishop and cabinet in the process of appointment and assignment for ordained clergy, or assignment of qualified and trained lay ministers.

5. Work to develop an effective and functioning system for recruitment of candidates for ordained ministry.

6. Establish working relationships with pastor-parish relations committees, clergy, district lay leaders, and other lay leadership, to develop faithful and effective systems of ministry within the district.

7. Serve as an example of spiritual leadership by living a balanced and faithful life, and by encouraging both laity and clergy to continue to grow in spiritual formation.

8. Offer support, care, and counsel to clergy concerning matters affecting their effective ministry.

9. Encourage the building of covenant groups and communities among both the clergy and clergy families, and the laity on the district.

10. Maintain regular contact with the clergy on the district for counsel and supervision, and receive written or electronic reports of each clergy person's continuing education, spiritual practices, current ministry work, and goals for future ministry.

11. Maintain the appropriate records of all clergy appointed to or related to the charges on the district (including clergy in extension ministry and ministry beyond the local church), as well as records dealing with property, endowments, and other tangible assets of the Global Methodist Church within the district.

12. In consultation with the bishop and cabinet, work to develop the best strategic deployment of clergy possible in the district, including realignment of pastoral charges when needed, and the exploration of larger parishes, cooperative parishes, multiple staff configurations, new faith communities, and ecumenical shared ministries.

13. Interpret and decide all questions of Church law and discipline raised by the churches in the district, subject to review by the resident bishop of the annual conference.

14. Serve at the pleasure of the bishop and assume other leadership responsibilities as the bishop determines for the health and effectiveness of the local churches in the district and annual conference.

¶ **508. THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE CABINET.** 1. Presiding elders, although assigned to districts, also have conference-wide responsibilities. As all ordained ministers are first elected into membership of an annual conference and subsequently appointed to pastoral charges, so presiding elders become through their selection members first of a cabinet before they are subsequently assigned by the bishop to service in districts.

2. The cabinet under the leadership of the bishop is the expression of superintending leadership in and through the annual conference. It is expected to speak to the conference and for the conference to the spiritual and temporal issues that exist within the region encompassed by the conference.

3. The cabinet is to consult and plan with the conference in order to make a thorough analysis of the needs of the conference for clergy, implementing this planning with a positive and conscious effort to fill these needs.

4. When the cabinet considers matters relating to coordination, implementation, or administration of the conference program, and other matters as the cabinet may determine, the conference lay leader and other conference staff as appropriate shall be invited to be present.

Section III. Appointment-Making

¶ 509. CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPOINTMENTS. 1. It is expected that the appointments of clergy serving congregations in which both transition into the Global Methodist Church will be retained, unless a change is needed because of illness, family situation, death, the election of senior status, clergy misconduct, or the financial exigencies of the congregation.

2. To strengthen and empower the local church to effectively carry out its mission for Christ in the world, clergy shall be appointed by the bishop, who is empowered to make and fix all appointments in the episcopal area of which the annual conference is a part.

3. Appointments are to be made with consideration of the needs, characteristics, and opportunities of congregations and institutions, the gifts and evidence of God's grace of those appointed, and in faithfulness to our commitment to an open itinerancy. Open itinerancy means appointments are made without regard to race, tribal or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, or age.

4. Appointment-making across conference lines shall be encouraged as a way of creating mobility and open itinerancy. Bishops and cabinets should share information on supply and demand across the church.

5. Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are made as a creative response to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the church and in its leadership. Cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments are appointments of clergypersons to congregations in which the majority of their constituencies are different from the clergyperson's own racial/ethnic and cultural background. Annual conferences shall prepare clergy and congregations for cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments through adequate training.

6. Fixing of Appointments.

a. Appointments in Provisional Annual Conferences. In provisional annual conferences the role of presidents *pro tempore* and presiding elders are critical to the work of deploying clergy leadership. The knowledge and discernment local leaders bring to this work is essential. Following ¶¶ 509-513, presidents *pro tempore* and presiding elders shall carry out the work of pastoral appointments. Presidents *pro tempore* shall support and equip presiding elders in this work in partnership and consultation with the bishop assigned primary oversight of the conference. Before finalizing a pastoral appointment, presidents *pro tem* shall communicate the intended appointment to the bishop. An appointment is finalized only when the bishop has fixed the appointment. The president *pro tempore* shall complete and submit the pastoral appointment form to the general Church staff within 3 days of the pastoral appointment being fixed.

b. Appointments in Areas Served by a Transitional Conference Advisory Team (TCAT). As TCATs work toward the formation of provisional annual conferences, pastoral appointment needs will emerge. In areas where there is not yet a provisional annual conference or provisional district(s), the bishop assigned to that area will collaborate with the TCAT leader in the work of pastoral appointments, following the guidelines of ¶¶ 509-513. An appointment is finalized only when the bishop has fixed the appointment. The TCAT leader shall complete and submit the pastoral appointment form to the general Church staff within 3 days of the pastoral appointment being fixed.

7. Simultaneous with the announcement of any appointment or group of appointments, the bishop or president *pro tempore* shall deliver a report to the annual conference committee on

episcopacy addressing the specific steps that were taken to ensure that persons were considered for each appointment who were of diverse race, tribal or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, and age. Such report shall enumerate the cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments that were made and the extent to which cross-racial and cross-cultural appointments were considered where such appointments were not made. The annual conference committee on episcopacy shall be responsible for working with the bishop and the cabinet to ensure compliance with our commitment to open itinerancy and to the equitable and fair consideration of clergy of diverse race, tribal or ethnic origin, gender, disability, marital status, and age during the appointment process. The annual conference committee on episcopacy shall annually report to the General Committee on Episcopacy the progress of the annual conference in fulfilling our commitment to open itinerancy, and the General Committee on Episcopacy shall annually provide direction to annual conference committees on episcopacy to enhance fulfillment of open itinerancy in each annual conference.

¶ 510. CONSULTATION AND APPOINTMENT-MAKING. Consultation is the process whereby the bishop and/or presiding elder confers with the pastor and pastor-parish relations committee, taking into consideration the criteria of ¶ 511, clergy performance evaluation, needs of the appointment under consideration, and mission of the Church. Consultation is not merely notification. Consultation is not committee selection or call of a pastor. The role of the pastor-parish relations committee is advisory, working in partnership with the bishop and cabinet on behalf of the whole church (Philippians 1:4-6). The committee must be given the opportunity to give input on the suitability of a proposed appointment and to raise any concerns it might have. When a committee raises substantive and missional concerns about the suitability of an appointment, such concerns must be addressed by the bishop and cabinet in considering whether to make the appointment. The bishop and cabinet must provide a rationale for their decision to the committee if they make the appointment. Consultation is both a continuing process and a more intense involvement during the period of change in appointment. The process of consultation is mandatory in every annual conference. The Council of Bishops shall hold its members accountable for the implementation of the process of consultation in appointment-making in their respective areas.

¶ 511. CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENTS. Appointments must take into account the unique needs of a charge, the community context, and also the gifts and evidence of God's grace of a particular pastor. To assist bishops, cabinets, pastors, and congregations to achieve an effective match of charges and pastors, criteria must be developed and analyzed in each instance and then shared with pastors and congregations.

1. *Congregations*—The presiding elder shall develop with the pastor and the pastor-parish relations committee of each church a profile that reflects the needs, characteristics, and opportunities for mission of the congregation consistent with the Global Methodist Church's mission statement. These profiles shall be reviewed and updated prior to an appointment being made.

2. *Pastors*—The presiding elder shall develop with the pastor a profile reflecting the pastor's gifts, evidence of God's grace, professional experience, and expectations, and also the needs and concerns of the pastor's spouse and family. These profiles shall be reviewed and updated prior to an appointment being made.

3. *Missional Setting*—The presiding elder should develop community profiles with the pastor and the pastor-parish relations committee. Sources of information for these profiles could include: neighborhood surveys; local, state, and national census data; information from the annual conference; and research data. Profiles should be reviewed and updated prior to an appointment being made.

¶ 512. CLERGY EFFECTIVENESS AND APPOINTMENT ASSURANCE. Clergy are one of the vital resources the Global Methodist Church has to make disciples of Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness across the land. To carry out our God-given mission, clergy must be effective in their leadership and ministry. Accordingly, within the Global Methodist Church, neither elders nor deacons shall have the right to a guaranteed appointment. If a bishop chooses not to appoint a clergy person, the bishop must provide a written rationale for that decision to the individual involved. Clergy are free to seek an appointment in an annual conference other than their own. Deacons and elders who are not under a current appointment shall be considered inactive (¶¶ 409.3, 410.3 respectively.)

¶ 513. FREQUENCY OF APPOINTMENTS. While the bishop shall report all pastoral appointments to each regular session of an annual conference, appointments to charges may be made at any time deemed advisable by the bishop and cabinet. Appointments are made with the expectation that the length of pastorates shall respond to the long-term pastoral needs of charges, communities, and pastors. The bishop and cabinet should work toward multi-year (rather than annual) local church appointments to facilitate a more effective ministry.

¶ 514. APPOINTMENT OF CLERGY TO MINISTRIES OUTSIDE THE LOCAL CHURCH. 1. Bishops may appoint deacons and elders to ministry settings outside the local church. Such appointments are to be made in consideration of the gifts and evidence of God's grace of the clergy person, needs of the community and receiving organization. The appointment should reflect the nature of ordained ministry as a faithful response of the mission of the church meeting the emerging needs in the world (¶ 403). It may be initiated by the individual clergy person, the agency seeking their service, the bishop, or the presiding elder. A similar process of consultation (¶511) shall be available to persons in appointments beyond the local church, as needed and appropriate.

2. Bishops may appoint deacons and elders to attend any recognized school, college, or theological seminary, or to participate in an accredited program of clinical pastoral education. Such appointments are a separate category from appointments to ministries outside the local church.

Section IV. Assignment and Removal of Bishops

¶ 515. PROVISIONS FOR EPISCOPAL AREAS. The Transitional Leadership Council shall determine the number of interim bishops based on missional potential, with consideration given to the following criteria:

1. The number of charge conferences and the number of active clergy in episcopal areas;
2. The geographic size of episcopal areas, measured by the square miles/square kilometers, and the numbers of time zones and nations;
3. The structure of episcopal areas, measured by the number of annual conferences, and the overall church membership in all annual, provisional annual, missionary conferences, and missions in episcopal areas.
4. The existing pattern of superintendency.
5. The number of bishops transferring into the Global Methodist Church who are available for assignment.

¶ 516. INTERIM BISHOPS. 1. *Transferring Bishops.* A bishop of The United Methodist Church or other autonomous Methodist church may join the Global Methodist Church by clergy transfer.

Application to transfer shall include an explicit written affirmation of the doctrines and Social Witness set forth in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* (§§ 101-202) and an agreement to abide by its discipline. Transferring bishops shall also agree to uphold the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. The bishop's transfer is subject to the approval of the Transitional Leadership Council. Bishops transferring to the Global Methodist Church shall be available for interim assignment to an existing or newly formed episcopal area by the Transitional Leadership Council. The Transitional Leadership Council may assign a retired United Methodist bishop who has joined the Global Methodist Church to serve as an interim bishop of an episcopal area during the period prior to the convening conference.

2. The General Conference of the Global Methodist Church may establish the process for electing and assigning bishops. Those assigned as interim bishops under this paragraph shall serve in that capacity until their successor is assigned under the process to be determined. The General Conference may provide for interim bishops to continue serving as active bishops, provided they meet the qualifications. Bishops transferring into the Global Methodist Church will be subject to the term limits set by the General Conference.

3. A retired bishop joining the Global Methodist Church shall become a senior elder and may bear the title of bishop emeritus. A bishop emeritus shall be a clergy member of the annual conference of their choice and may serve in any capacity allowed for senior clergy (§ 418). A senior elder serving as an interim bishop under § 516.1 will not be considered a bishop emeritus but shall have all the privileges and responsibilities of an active bishop.

§ 517. VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF BISHOP. A vacancy in the office of bishop may occur due to death, transition to senior status, resignation, administrative or judicial procedure, leave of absence, or medical leave. In case the assignment of a bishop to residential supervision of an episcopal area is terminated by any of the above causes or no bishop is assigned to provide residential supervision, the vacancy shall be filled by the Transitional Leadership Council from among active bishops, bishops emeriti, or by the appointment of a president pro tempore. A president *pro tempore* is an elder given responsibility for residential oversight for that area. A president pro tempore assigned to provide residential oversight for an area must reside in that area, unless the Transitional Leadership Council grants an exception for missional purposes. If such an exception is granted, the missional purpose must be clearly stated and the exception shall be limited in time, but renewable by further action of the Transitional Leadership Council.

§ 518. STATUS OF SENIOR BISHOPS. 1. Bishops may choose senior status (§ 418) upon approval of a majority of the Transitional Leadership Council. Elders who formerly served as bishops but are not now serving as interim bishops may use the title of "bishop emeritus," but they will not retain their episcopal responsibilities or membership on the Council of Bishops unless they have been assigned by the Transitional Leadership Council to serve in an interim capacity due to a vacancy within an episcopal area for at least three months (§ 516.1, .3).

2. A bishop emeritus shall be a clergy member of the annual conference of their choice and may serve in any capacity allowed for senior clergy (§ 418).

§ 519. LEAVES. 1. *Leave of Absence*—A bishop may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six months by the Transitional Leadership Council. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the Transitional Leadership Council shall preside in the episcopal area.

2. *Medical Leave*—Bishops who by reason of impaired health are temporarily unable to perform full work may be granted a leave of absence for a justifiable reason for not more than six

months by the Transitional Leadership Council. During the period for which the leave is granted, the bishop shall be released from all episcopal responsibilities, and another bishop chosen by the Transitional Leadership Council shall preside in the episcopal area. If, after the six-month time period is over, the bishop is still unable to perform full work due to impaired health, the bishop should apply for disability benefits through the benefit program.

¶ 520. COMPLAINTS AGAINST BISHOPS. 1. Episcopal leadership in the Global Methodist Church shares with all other ordained persons in the sacred trust of their ordination. The ministry of bishops as set forth in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* also flows from the Scriptures. Whenever a bishop violates this trust or is unable to fulfill appropriate responsibilities, continuation in the episcopal office shall be subject to review. This review shall have as its primary purpose a just resolution of any violations of this sacred trust, in the hope that God's work of justice, reconciliation, and healing may be realized.

2. Any complaint concerning the effectiveness, competence, or one or more of the offenses listed in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* shall be submitted to the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council. A complaint is a written statement claiming misconduct, unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties, or one or more of the listed offenses.

3. The complaint shall be administered according to the provisions of Part Eight: Judicial Administration. Any involuntary status change of a bishop must be recommended by a three-fourths vote of the investigative committee and approved by the Transitional Leadership Council by a two-thirds vote (*Judicial Practice and Procedure* 3).

Section V. Expressions of Collective Superintendency

¶ 521. COUNCIL OF BISHOPS 1. Bishops, although assigned to serve an episcopal area, are general superintendents of the whole Church. As all ordained ministers are first elected into membership of an annual conference and subsequently appointed to pastoral charges, so bishops become through their election members first of the Council of Bishops before they are subsequently assigned to areas of service. By virtue of their election and consecration, bishops are members of the Council of Bishops and are bound in special covenant with all other bishops. In keeping with this covenant, bishops fulfill their servant leadership and express their mutual accountability. The Council of Bishops is a faith community of mutual trust and concern responsible for the faith development and continuing well-being of its members. Bishops may meet digitally or in person as a Council of Bishops to provide mutual support and to share best practices, but the Council shall have no other responsibilities.

2. The Council of Bishops is thus the collegial expression of episcopal leadership in and to the Church and through the Church into the world. The Church expects the Council of Bishops to speak to the Church and from the Church to the world.

3. The Council of Bishops is composed of all active bishops and any senior elders who are assigned to serve as interim bishops for a minimum of three months. There shall be no funds allocated for any Council staff. Bishops emeriti who are not appointed to serve as interim bishops shall not attend meetings of the Council of Bishops or participate in its deliberations.

Section VI. Ecumenical Relationships

¶ 522. CHRISTIAN UNITY. 1. The Global Methodist Church recognizes that the global Christian community transcends denominational barriers, consisting of "all true believers under the Lordship of Jesus Christ," and may be found wherever the "pure word of God is preached, and the Sacraments

duly administered.” Jesus’ prayer in John 17 that all his disciples “may be one” compels us to seek closer communion with brothers and sisters of different communions. Locally and globally, Christian communions which are committed to the “faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 1:3) will find in the Global Methodist Church a willing partner in worship, evangelism, disciple-making, and works of mercy.

2. Wesleyan Unity Commission.

a. The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint a Wesleyan Unity Commission that shall be chaired by a bishop of the Global Methodist Church and consist of eight additional persons.

b. The Wesleyan Unity Commission shall bring recommendations to the Transitional Leadership Council with respect to full organic union with other Wesleyan denominations or associations of churches either before or at the convening General Conference. The Wesleyan Unity Commission shall recommend to the Transitional Leadership Council whether such denominations or associations shall have representation at the convening General Conference with voice, and with or without vote. Within discussions about greater union with other denominations or associations, particular care shall be taken to uphold the doctrine and moral principles and polity of the Global Methodist Church. The Transitional Leadership Council shall have the option of approving a plan of union to be effective immediately or to recommend such a plan of union to be approved at the convening General Conference.

c. The Wesleyan Unity Committee shall bring recommendations for covenant relationships with Affiliated Covenant Churches under ¶ 523.4 to be approved at the General Conference.

¶ 523. OTHER WESLEYAN DENOMINATIONS. 1. In addition to wider ecumenical and interchurch cooperation, the Global Methodist Church has a particular interest in fostering greater unity with other Wesleyan and Methodist groups which share a common heritage of theology, history, and polity. Unity among the spiritual heirs of John Wesley is a profound hope and desire of the Global Methodist Church, rooted in our heritage as a “connectional” movement, linking congregations and conferences in cooperative ministry and mutual encouragement. Closer relationships with other Wesleyan groups provide increased opportunities for global mission and evangelism, enrichment in our understanding and practice of ministry, and the sharing of resources and expertise.

2. World Methodist Council. Founded in the 19th century by predecessor denominations of the Global Methodist Church, the World Methodist Council has been an effective forum for the development of trans-Methodist fellowship and cooperative ministry. Following its legal formation, the Global Methodist Church will apply for formal membership in the World Methodist Conference.

3. Other Trans-Methodist bodies. The Wesleyan Unity Commission (see ¶ 522.2) is charged with exploring the advisability of membership of the Global Methodist Church in other trans-Methodist organizations, such as the Asian Methodist Council, European Methodist Council, Global Wesleyan Alliance, or Pan-Methodist Commission.

4. Affiliated Covenant Relationships with Other Christian Denominations or Associations of Churches. The Global Methodist Church welcomes covenant relationships with other Christian denominations or association of churches which do not involve organic union with the Global Methodist Church. We celebrate that some may wish to explore a closer, formalized relationship, but not unite organically with the Global Methodist Church. The purpose of establishing such covenant relationships is to enhance our mutual Christian witness and effectiveness, and/or to allow for increased reach into regions or nations where one or the other has little or no presence.

Conversations toward formalized relationships as Affiliated Covenant Churches may be held by the Wesleyan Unity Commission prior to the General Conference as set forth in ¶ 522.2 with such

recommendations being presented to the General Conference for approval. These covenant relationships may include mutual recognition of baptism and ordained ministry, eucharistic fellowship, shared representation at governing assemblies, and/or plans for shared ministry and resources.

5. *Union with the Global Methodist Church*. We rejoice that some Wesleyan bodies may wish to explore full organic union with the Global Methodist Church. The Wesleyan Unity Commission (§ 522.2), or its designated representatives, shall represent the Global Methodist Church in conversations related to full union. Such plans of union may be approved by the the General Conference. Such plans of union shall include: (1) A statement of vision on a preferred future; (2) a statement on doctrinal and theological alignment; and (3) a plan for integration of ministries including evidence of consultation with all regional conferences directly affected by the plan of union.

a. Plans which do not require alterations to the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the Global Methodist Church shall be ratified by the General Conference and become immediately effective. The other Wesleyan body shall have voted to dissolve its own governance structure to become effective upon ratification of the plan of union by the General Conference.

b. Plans which require alterations to the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* of the Global Methodist Church shall require a three-fourths majority vote by the General Conference for ratification.

PART SIX CONFERENCES

¶601. **THE CONFERENCE SYSTEM.** Beginning in 1744 when John Wesley first met with his brother Charles and a few other clergymen to consider "how we should proceed to save our own souls and those that heard us," the principal expression of connectionalism within Methodism has historically been within its conference system.

The agenda for the first conference was a simple one: "1. What to teach, 2. How to teach, and 3. What to do, that is, how to regulate our doctrine, discipline, and practice," and the agenda for that and subsequent meetings was generally expressed in a question and answer format.

Organized at multiple levels -- charge conferences, district conferences, annual conferences, regional conferences, and a general conference -- the conference system is at the spiritual center of Methodism and refers not simply to a meeting and the decisions that may be made in such a setting, but both to the act of gathering together in holy conferencing, and to the persons themselves who do so. The conference system provides for collective discernment and collective decision-making as the governing principle of our church polity (Proverbs 15:22, Acts 15:1-35).

Section 1. The Convening General Conference

¶ 602. INTENTIONALLY OMITTED.

¶ 603. **BOOK OF DOCTRINES AND DISCIPLINE.** 1. *Translation.* All actions of the General Conference, including this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, shall be translated at general church expense into the official languages of any part of the Global Methodist Church. This material shall also be available in digital form.

2. *Adaptability.* All provisions of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* shall be generally applicable to all geographic, national, and cultural parts of the church. The adaptability of any provisions shall be written into the provisions themselves in order to be recognized as valid.

¶ 604. **POWERS.** The convening General Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters that are distinctly connectional, including, but not limited to:

1. Adopt a constitution for the Global Methodist Church.
2. Ensure the mission of the church is kept foremost by all of the ministries, agencies, clergy, laity, and officers of the Global Methodist Church. In doing so, the convening General Conference shall remember that disciples of Jesus are made at the level of the local church. The convening General Conference shall endeavor to keep as many resources at the local church level as possible, so that the mission of the Global Methodist Church can be achieved.
3. Define the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of those who serve as deacons, elders, supply pastors, and other leaders within the Global Methodist Church.
4. Establish the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of church membership, which shall be open to all who believe, irrespective of race, color, ethnic or tribal identity, gender, or disability.
5. Define the qualifications, duties, and responsibilities of the episcopacy and provide for their selection, continuance, and discontinuance. All bishops shall be accountable to the general church through the provisions of Part Eight (Judicial Administration) of this *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*.
6. Determine the powers of regional, annual, district, and church/charge conferences and other connectional associations within the Global Methodist Church, providing as appropriate for each such body to adapt structures that may best maximize their mission.

7. Determine the boundaries of regional conferences, and where there are no regional conferences, to determine the boundaries of annual conferences.

8. Establish and give oversight to such general boards, program agencies, or commissions and to form ministry partnerships as shall be deemed necessary for strengthening and promoting the mission of the Global Methodist Church through the local church.

9. Determine a program for raising and distributing the funds that are necessary for the work of the Church.

10. Fix the ratio of representation to the General and any regional conferences, based upon the number of professing members in each annual conference and region, and other factors determined by the General Conference.

11. Approve and revise music resources and worship rituals of the Global Methodist Church, providing for variations as shall be most helpful to particular contexts worldwide, including making such resources available digitally.

12. Provide a judicial system mandating uniform processes and procedures and protecting the rights of all those within the Global Methodist Church.

13. Act upon petitions received dealing with church organization and polity, and resolutions dealing with non-disciplinary matters.

14. Adopt or revise a statement of Our Social Witness, provided that such adoption or revision shall require a three-quarters vote of the convening General Conference.

15. To effectively speak on behalf of the whole church, resolutions dealing with social concerns shall similarly require the support of three-quarters of the convening General Conference. All resolutions not part of Our Social Witness or church law shall remain in effect only until the next General Conference convenes when they may or may not be revised or reapproved.

16. In the absence of a regional conference, provide for the oversight and/or governance of institutions related to the church such as hospitals, schools, or other such entities.

17. To enact other legislation it determines would be helpful to the mission of the Global Methodist Church.

¶ 605. OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE. 1. The bishops shall be the presiding officers at the General Conference.

2. The convening General Conference shall elect a secretary upon nomination by the Transitional Leadership Council. The secretary shall oversee the publication and translation of proposals made to the convening General Conference and the actions taken by it, including publishing a transcript of the daily proceedings. The secretary shall be responsible for the corrected copy of the permanent record of the convening General Conference. The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint an interim secretary of the convening General Conference who will serve until his or her successor is elected.

¶ 606. ORGANIZATION. 1. *Rules*—The General Conference shall operate under *Robert's Rules of Order* and such supplemental rules as are adopted by the convening General Conference.

2. *Quorum*—When the General Conference is in session, it shall require the presence of a majority of the whole number of delegates to the convening General Conference to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; but a smaller number may take a recess or adjourn from day to day in order to secure a quorum, and at the final session may approve the journal, order the record of the roll call, and adjourn *sine die*.

3. *Virtual Sessions*-- Where necessary due to international or local conditions that prevent the physical assembling of delegates, the Transitional Leadership Council may, with a two-thirds vote, authorize the conducting of the conference via electronic or other digital means.

¶ 607. PETITIONS TO THE CONVENING GENERAL CONFERENCE. Any organization, clergy member, or lay member of the Global Methodist Church may petition the convening General Conference in the following manner:

1. The petition must be sent to the Transitional Leadership Council or a designated petitions secretary. It shall be in typed or printed or electronic form, or other means approved by the Transitional Leadership Council, and shall follow a format determined by them.

2. Each petition must address only one issue if the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* is not affected; if the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* is affected, each petition must address only one paragraph of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, except that, if two or more paragraphs are so closely related that a change in one affects the others, the petition may call for the amendment of those paragraphs also to make them consistent with one another. Petitions dealing with more than one paragraph in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* that do not meet these criteria are invalid. Petitions that meet these criteria (composite petitions) shall not be separated into pieces.

3. Each petition must be signed by the person submitting it, accompanied by appropriate identification, such as address, local church, organization, or annual conference. Any petition submitted by an individual must also be signed by at least ten other professing or clergy members. Each petition submitted digitally must identify the individual submitting it, accompanied by identification as above, and must contain a valid electronic mail return address or return fax number by which the submitter can be reached. Electronic signatures will be accepted in accordance with common business practice.

4. Petitions must be received by the Transitional Leadership Council or its designee no later than 120 days prior to the opening session of the convening General Conference.

5. Petitions properly submitted shall be printed in advance of the convening General Conference in all the principal languages of the church and made available to delegates at least 60 days prior to the opening session of the convening General Conference. Where the content of petitions is essentially the same, the petition will be printed once, with the first author named and the number of additional copies received printed. Upon publication, all translations of the advance publication shall be made available as a downloadable file, free of charge, on the denominational website. Petitions and/or resolutions received after the deadline may be printed and distributed to all the delegates upon the approval of each for distribution by the convening General Conference.

6. The secretary of the convening General Conference shall arrange for electronic access to all petitions, including convening General Conference actions and the resulting impact on the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, throughout the convening General Conference session. This access shall be available until the publication of the new edition of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Implementation shall be according to guidelines established by the Transitional Leadership Council.

¶ 608. LEGISLATION EFFECTIVE DATE. All legislation of the convening General Conference shall become effective January 1 following the session of the convening General Conference at which it is enacted, unless otherwise specified.

Section II. The Regional Conferences

¶ 609. REGIONAL CONFERENCES. The General Conference may establish regional conferences for the purposes of coordinating and conducting the mission of the Church around the world. The General Conference shall determine the powers, authority, and boundaries of the regional conference. The regional conferences shall be composed of clergy and lay delegates in equal number elected from the annual conferences within each regional conference. General Conference

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delegates shall also serve as delegates to the regional conference. Where necessary due to conditions that prevent the physical assembling of delegates, the Transitional Leadership Council or the regional college of bishops may, with a two-thirds vote, authorize the conducting of the conference via electronic or other digital means.

Section III. The Annual Conference

¶ 610. ORGANIZATION. 1. *Composition.* Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability across a geographical region. A special annual conference or district that is not geographically bound and overlaps the boundaries of other annual conferences or districts can be formed by the decision of Transitional Leadership Council at the request of a group of churches. The voting membership of an annual conference shall be composed of those elders, deacons, and transitional local pastors under appointment (except as limited by ¶ 419.2b) and senior clergy who meet the qualifications of ¶ 418, as well as at least an equal number of lay members elected by each charge or by the district or annual conference. Each charge shall be entitled to as many lay members as it has appointed clergy. The annual conference may add lay members of the annual conference who are serving in conference leadership positions. The annual conference shall determine the method of electing additional lay members to equalize the number of clergy members. Only laity shall vote in the election of equaling laity. Such members may be elected by a charge conference, district conference, or the annual conference, but they must be elected and not appointed.

2. When at any time a lay member is unable to attend the session, the alternate lay member, if present, shall be seated. The lay member or the alternate, whichever is seated, has the responsibility of the lay member to report to the local church on actions of the annual conference.

3. If not otherwise a voting member of the annual conference, the conference chancellor shall be seated in the annual conference and shall be given the privilege of the floor without vote.

4. An annual conference may incorporate under the law of the countries, states, and other political entities within whose bounds they are located.

5. The bishop shall appoint the time and place for holding the annual conference, in coordination with whatever committee or group is tasked with planning and organizing the conference.

6. Where necessary due to local conditions that prevent the physical assembling of delegates, the bishop may, with a two-thirds vote of the cabinet, authorize the conducting of the conference via electronic or other digital means.

7. A special session of the annual conference may be held at such time and in such place as shall have been determined by the annual conference after consultation with the bishop, or by the bishop with the concurrence of three-fourths of the presiding elders. A special session of the annual conference shall have only such powers as are stated in the call, unless the annual conference by a two-thirds vote shall determine that other business may be transacted.

8. The bishop assigned shall preside over the annual conference or, in case of inability, shall arrange for another bishop to preside. In the absence of a bishop, the conference shall by ballot, without debate, elect a president *pro tempore* from among the ordained elders. The president thus elected shall discharge all the duties of a bishop except ordination.

9. The annual conference shall elect a secretary and such other officers as it may determine.

¶ 611. POWERS AND DUTIES. Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability across a geographical region. In

addition to coming together for edification, fellowship, and inspiration, the annual conference is charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Create a program of ministry within its area that can fulfill the mission of the church and enhance its witness.
2. Determine a program for raising and distributing funds necessary to conduct the work and mission of the church in its region.
3. Encourage and facilitate the planting of new churches, including the authorization of sponsorship by existing congregations, and to charter such new congregations (§§ 339.17, 349).
4. Establish the number of districts, upon recommendation from the bishop, cabinet, and conference leadership (§ 504.6).
5. Form such boards, commissions and agencies as may be required to further its mission, specifying the composition of each body and electing the members thereof (§ 612).
6. Elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference according to the formula determined by the General Conference. Clergy delegates shall be members in full connection in good standing of the Global Methodist Church who have served a minimum of two years preceding their election in the Global Methodist Church or its predecessors. During the period prior to the convening General Conference, under the provisions of § 419.2a, transitional local pastors who have been approved for ordination as elders or deacons shall be members in full connection and may be clergy delegates provided that they are in good standing and have served a minimum of two years preceding their election in the Global Methodist Church or its predecessors. Lay delegates shall have been professing members of the Global Methodist Church, or its predecessors, for at least two years. Both clergy and lay delegates shall be elected by a minimum of fifty percent of votes cast plus one, with clergy voting for clergy delegates and laity voting for lay delegates.
7. Upon the adoption of a constitution for the Global Methodist Church, vote on all constitutional amendments as approved by the General Conference and distributed to the annual conferences for ratification.
8. The ordained clergy meeting in executive session are to approve the ordination of clergy as recommended by the annual conference board of ministry (§§ 409.2-3, 410.1), and to approve clergy status changes as recommended by the board of ministry (§§ 415-16).
9. Establish minimum standards for parsonages and other ministry housing, if desired (§§ 343.4e, 345.8m).
10. Approve by simple majority vote the transfer of a congregation into or out of the annual conference to or from another annual conference (§ 351).
11. Maintain the records of the annual conference, including the records of closed churches (§ 328.7) and annual statistical reports from all local churches (§§ 330, 339.10).
12. Adopt rules for its own governance, provided they do not conflict with the requirements of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

¶ 612. ANNUAL CONFERENCE BOARDS AND COMMITTEES. Annual Conferences shall create the following boards and committees:

1. *The Board of Ministry.* The Board of Ministry shall be responsible for overseeing the recruiting and credentialing of clergy for the furtherance of the mission of the Global Methodist Church. (§§ 406-410, 418) The Board shall also be responsible for overseeing all clergy changes in conference relations. (§§ 415-418)

- a. Members shall be nominated by the bishop and elected by the Annual Conference. The board shall include elders, deacons, and laity. No more than one-third of the Board may be laity. Annual Conferences shall set the number of members of the Board. Members shall serve for six years and may succeed themselves once. Notwithstanding other provisions of the *Book of Doctrines*

and Discipline, deacons and laity on the Board of Ministry may vote on the ordination and conference relations of all clergy candidates.

b. If a member of the Board of Ministry cannot serve for any reason, the bishop, in consultation with the Cabinet, shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.

c. The Board of Ministry shall elect from its members a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.

d. The Board of Ministry may establish subcommittees and teams to assist it in its work.

2. *Episcopacy Committee*. The Committee on Episcopacy shall be responsible to support the bishop in the oversight of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Global Methodist Church, with special reference to the area where the bishop has residential responsibility.

a. Members shall be nominated by the Conference Leadership Committee and elected by the annual conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee with a maximum of 12 persons serving at any one time and no less than six. Members shall serve six years and may not succeed themselves. No member of the conference staff or member of the bishop's family shall serve on the committee. The bishop shall serve on the committee with voice but not vote.

b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the Leadership Committee, in consultation with the cabinet, shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.

c. The Episcopacy Committee shall elect from its members a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.

d. The committee shall meet only with the knowledge of the bishop. The bishop shall be present at each meeting of the committee, except where he or she voluntarily excuses himself or herself.

e. The committee shall be available to the bishop for counsel including advising the bishop concerning conditions within the episcopal area as they affect relationships between the bishop and the people of the Annual Conference.

f. Keeping in mind the roles, responsibilities, and duties laid in ¶¶502-504, the Committee shall engage in an annual evaluation of the Bishop in consultation with the Transitional Leadership Council.

3. *Finance and Administration Committee*. The Finance and Administration Committee shall be responsible to develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, budgets, procedures, and management services for the annual conference.

a. Members shall be nominated by the Conference Leadership Committee and elected by the annual conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee. Members shall serve six years and may succeed themselves once. The bishop, one presiding elder chosen by the bishop, and the conference treasurer shall serve on the committee with voice but not vote.

b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the Leadership Committee shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.

c. The committee shall elect from its members a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.

d. The committee shall coordinate its work with the Transitional Leadership Council or its designee of the Global Methodist Church.

4. *Leadership Committee.* The Leadership Committee shall be responsible for nominating clergy and laity to serve on annual conference committees and boards.

a. Members shall be nominated by the bishop and elected by the Annual Conference. The committee shall include equal numbers of clergy and laity. The annual conference shall set the number of members of the committee. Members shall serve six years and may not succeed themselves. The bishop and presiding elders shall also serve on the committee with voice and vote in addition to the clergy and laity elected by the annual conference.

b. If a member of the committee cannot serve for any reason, the bishop shall appoint an interim member to serve the remainder of the unused term. The annual conference shall confirm the interim appointment at its next meeting.

c. The bishop shall serve as the chair of the committee. The committee shall elect from its members a vice-chair, secretary, and any other officers it deems necessary. Election shall be by simple majority and shall be for a term of years to be determined by the annual conference.

5. *Committee on Investigation.* The committee on investigation shall be responsible for considering judicial complaints against clergy as set out in Part Eight Judicial Administration of this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and specifically ¶809.2.

a. There shall be seven members, four ordained clergy and three laity, and seven alternate members, four ordained clergy and three laity. None of the members or alternates shall be members of the Board of Ministry or the cabinet - or their immediate family members. Members shall serve three years and may succeed themselves once.

b. The bishop shall nominate persons for the committee, in consultation with the Board of Ministry (for the clergy members). Nominations shall reflect the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of the conference. The annual conference shall elect the committee, with the power to elect additional members or alternates during the term of office as needed. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character.

c. The committee on investigation shall elect a chair and secretary and organize at the annual conference following its election.

d. Should a member of the committee on investigation have been a party to any of the proceedings in the case that comes before the committee, he or she shall be disqualified from sitting on the committee during its consideration of that case, and an alternate member shall take his or her place.

e. Four clergy and three laity (or their alternates) seated as members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.

f. If an annual conference has not yet elected a committee on investigation, the bishop or president *pro tempore* shall appoint the members of the committee in consultation with the cabinet.

6. *Administrative Review Committee.* The administrative review committee (¶ 805.2) shall be responsible for ensuring that the disciplinary procedures for resolving a substantiated administrative complaint are properly followed as required by *Judicial Practices and Procedures* 5.2 and fair process (¶804).

a. There shall be an administrative review committee in every annual conference composed of three ordained clergy and two alternates who are not members of the cabinet or the Board of Ministry – or their immediate family members. Members shall serve three years and may succeed themselves once.

b. The bishop shall nominate the members of the committee and the clergy session of the annual conference shall elect them. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character.

c. The administrative review committee shall elect a chair and secretary and organize at the annual conference following its election.

d. Should a member of the administrative review committee have been a party to any of the proceedings in the matter that comes before the committee, he or she shall be disqualified from sitting on the committee during its consideration of that case, and an alternate member shall take his or her place.

e. Three clergy (or their alternates) seated as members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.

f. If an annual conference has not yet elected an administrative review committee, the bishop or president *pro tempore* shall appoint the members of the committee in consultation with the cabinet.

7. The annual conference may create additional boards and committees to accomplish its work, as it deems appropriate.

¶ 613. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.

1. The annual conference should establish a funding percentage for its local churches to support the work of the conference, including providing for the costs of the bishop (¶¶ 611.2, 505). Efforts should be made to minimize conference funding in order to allow maximum resources to remain in local churches. Support for ministries within and beyond the annual conference should not be included in such funding percentage but be raised as mission giving from individuals and local churches. The conference should take into consideration any guidelines offered by the Transitional Leadership Council on the setting of the funding percentage. The general church funding percentage shall be set by the Transitional Leadership Council without adjustment by the annual conference.

2. In order to allocate delegates to the convening General Conference, the Transitional Leadership Council shall establish a deadline by which time the annual conference must submit a list of those churches aligning with the Global Methodist Church and the number of full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments in the annual conference. Delegates for the convening General Conference shall be allocated based on the number of churches and full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments an annual conference or other divisions of the church not part of an annual conference has as compared to the total number of churches and full-time equivalent pastoral appointments and assignments of the Global Methodist Church as of the deadline. (Alignment decisions may be made by local churches after that deadline, according to any provisions adopted by the General Conference of The United Methodist Church, but such decisions would not be taken into account for allocating delegates to the convening General Conference.) The Transitional Leadership Council may allocate delegates to annual conferences or other divisions of the church not part of an annual conference that are formed or in formation after the deadline established by the Transitional Leadership Council.

3. As local churches are formed into new annual conferences by the Transitional Leadership Council, the new annual conferences shall begin organizing themselves according to the provisions of ¶¶ 611-612, under the guidance and supervision of the Transitional Leadership Council and any transitional bodies at the general church level created by the Transitional Leadership Council.

PART SEVEN CONNECTIONAL ORGANIZATION

¶ **701. CONNECTIONAL LIFE.** Reflecting the shared mission of each of our congregations, connectional entities may be formed at the general, regional, and annual conference levels to effectively support the task of making disciples and spreading scriptural holiness. These organizations shall prioritize resourcing the work of local churches, functioning where possible in and through partnerships with existing ministries, congregations, annual conferences, and other bodies, rather than creating new structures. They may set standards and share best practices in adapting to fit the context and changing circumstances across the church and globe. While providing secure and reliable funding channels where appropriate, connectional entities shall nonetheless be frugal, with minimal structures and staff, so as not to burden local congregations with extra financial demands, embodying the call of Jesus not to be served, but to serve (Matthew 20:28).

Section I. Transitional Leadership Council

¶ **702. PURPOSE AND COMPOSITION.** 1. During the period of transition between the legal formation of the Global Methodist Church and the effective date of actions taken by the convening General Conference, the Transitional Leadership Council shall serve as the primary leadership body of the church. As the most representative body other than the General Conference, it is charged with making all necessary decisions related to the forming of the Global Methodist Church. Its decisions are subject to approval, modification, or revocation by the convening General Conference and shall be in effect only until the effective date of permanent policies and procedures adopted by the convening General Conference that would replace them. Following the convening General Conference, the work of the Transitional Leadership Council shall be transitioned into the connectional entities established and formed by that body.

2. The Transitional Leadership Council was formed out of a meeting held in Atlanta, Georgia, on March 2-4, 2020. Its 17 members consisted of three retired bishops (one from Africa) and 14 clergy and laity representing some traditional renewal groups, as well as non-aligned traditionalists. Non-episcopal members included one person each from Africa, Europe/Eurasia, and the Philippines. Its members also represent racial diversity, with African-American, Hispanic-Latino, and Asian-American members. This group is empowered to act as the governing body for the establishment of the Global Methodist Church.

3. Any bishop (active or senior) who transfers to the church under the provisions of ¶ 516 shall be added to the membership of the Transitional Leadership Council. Bishops who serve on the Transitional Leadership Council are expected to take an active role in helping to govern the church, including oversight responsibilities in annual conferences, as needed during the transition. For each bishop added to the Transitional Leadership Council, the Transitional Leadership Council shall also elect by majority vote two additional clergy or lay members, broadening the diversity and representation of the body.

4. The members of the Transitional Leadership Council shall serve until that body is disbanded under the provisions of the convening General Conference.

¶ **703. RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY.** 1. The Transitional Leadership Council is empowered to make all necessary decisions related to the forming and initial operating of the Global Methodist Church until the effective date of legislation adopted by the convening General Conference. The Transitional Leadership Council may form transitional bodies and assign to those

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bodies authority and responsibility for aspects of the church's work and the transitional process. Such transitional bodies remain amenable to the Transitional Leadership Council and their decisions are reviewable by the Transitional Leadership Council.

2. *Specific Responsibilities.* The responsibilities of the Transitional Leadership Council include, but are not limited to:

a. Promote knowledge of and allegiance to Wesleyan doctrine and moral teaching as reflected in the doctrinal and social witness statements in Parts One and Two of this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

b. Act as the legal incorporating body and establish the transitional polity of the Global Methodist Church.

c. Oversee the receiving of local congregations into the Global Methodist Church under the provisions of ¶ 355.1-2.

d. Form groups of such local churches into districts and annual conferences under the provisions of ¶ 355.3.

e. Approve the reception of bishops (active and retired) into the Global Methodist Church (¶ 516).

f. Form episcopal areas and determine their boundaries. Determine the number of interim bishops and assign them to episcopal areas (¶ 515).

g. Oversee the receiving of clergy transferring into the Global Methodist Church under the provisions of ¶ 419. Serve as the appellate body for contested decisions.

h. Assign regional or annual conference bodies the responsibility for evaluating the status of licensed local pastors and candidates for ordained ministry to determine their status in the Global Methodist Church (¶ 419). Serve as the appellate body for contested decisions.

j. Appoint a provisional ecclesiastical endorsing board to provide denominational endorsement to persons in specialized ministries that require such (e.g., military or hospital chaplaincy) (¶ 413).

j. Establish a connectional fund for ministerial education and oversee its collection and distribution (¶ 411).

k. Oversee the appointment process of clergy through its bishops (¶¶ 355.4, 509 ff).

l. Facilitate a process for the transfer of clergy from one annual conference to another, as well as for moving clergy to parts of the nation or world where they are most needed (¶ 504.10).

m. Determine the compensation of bishops (¶ 505).

n. Establish the time and place of meeting for the convening General Conference. Appoint the necessary committees to organize the logistics of the event (¶ 604).

o. Determine the number of delegates for the convening General Conference and the formula for their allocation to the various annual conferences (¶ 604).

p. Appoint an interim secretary of the convening General Conference to administer the petition process and other non-logistical matters related to the convening conference. Nominate a convening General Conference secretary for approval by the convening conference (¶¶ 605, 607).

q. Establish guidelines for the publication and the online availability of both proposals and petitions to the convening General Conference and completed actions of the conference (¶ 607).

r. Form such interim commissions and other general church entities as it judges necessary to begin implementing the polity and mission of the Global Methodist Church.

s. Hire necessary staff to accomplish the work of the general church, including the work of any interim commissions or other transitional general church entities.

t. Establish connectional funding for the general church during the transition, create a system for receiving and disbursing funds given, and ensure fiscal accountability and integrity in all handling of church funds.

u. Implement the accountability processes required in *Part Eight* and the *Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules (JPP)*. Approve any involuntary status change of a bishop by a two-thirds vote (§ 520.3).

Section II. Transitional Connectional Commissions

¶ 704. **PURPOSE AND COMPOSITION.** 1. *Purpose.* During the period of transition between the adoption of this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* by the Transitional Leadership Council and the effective date of actions taken by the convening General Conference, the Transitional Leadership Council may appoint transitional connectional commissions to begin the work of organizing and administering the connectional ministries of the denomination. The Transitional Leadership Council shall define the scope of work for any commission so formed and shall have the right of final approval of any policies or actions recommended by a commission. These decisions are subject to approval, modification, or revocation by the convening General Conference and shall be in effect only until the convening General Conference establishes permanent policies and procedures that would replace them. Following the convening General Conference, the work of the transitional connectional commissions shall be transitioned into the connectional commissions established and formed by that body.

2. *Membership.* The Transitional Leadership Council shall determine the number of members for any transitional commission it establishes. The Transitional Leadership Council shall elect members for each commission by majority vote, based on the expertise and gifts they bring to the tasks of a commission. Care shall be taken to include persons from a broad range of racial, ethnic, tribal, gender, economic, and age characteristics. All potential geographical regions of the denomination should be represented. No person may serve simultaneously on more than one transitional commission. Commission members, including the officers, shall serve without remuneration. Travel and meeting expenses shall be paid for commission members by the Transitional Leadership Council out of general church funds.

3. *Leadership.* The Transitional Leadership Council shall name the chair of each transitional commission. The commission shall elect a secretary and may elect other officers to facilitate its work. No bishop may serve as the chair of a commission while serving in the episcopal office. Each transitional commission may have one bishop, selected by the Transitional Leadership Council, serving with voice and vote to help maintain communication and coordination with the bishops and to provide spiritual leadership to the commission.

4. *Staff.* The Transitional Leadership Council may approve the hiring of staff persons to resource the work of the transitional commissions, paid for out of general church funds. The chair of the Transitional Leadership Council shall make all hiring decisions and recommend compensation levels to the Transitional Leadership Council for approval.

5. *Nondiscrimination.* The Global Methodist Church is committed to open and fair processes in its commissions and institutions, including in the hiring, retention, compensation, promotion, and retirement of staff. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of gender, race, color, national origin, disability, current or potential pregnancy, or chronic or potentially terminal illnesses, provided that the individual is able to adequately discharge the duties assigned to her or him. As a part of our witness, individuals employed by the church shall subscribe to the doctrinal and moral standards of the Global Methodist Church and give evidence of the same in their life and ministry, including faithfulness in marriage, understood to be between one man and one woman, or chastity in singleness.

¶ 705. POTENTIAL TRANSITIONAL CONNECTIONAL COMMISSIONS. The Transitional Leadership Council may form transitional commissions dealing with any or all of these tasks or areas of ministry:

1. Evangelism, Missions, and Church Planting – including, but not limited to, fostering cross-cultural and international partnerships between local churches, districts, and annual conferences; vetting, approving, and maintaining accountability for mission projects and their funding; providing for disaster relief and refugee ministry; identifying and providing resources for church planting in various cultural contexts; and consulting with bishops, annual conference leaders, and local churches to plan and strategize for planting churches.

2. Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry – including, but not limited to, encouraging growth in discipleship through small groups; proposing liturgies and orders of worship for use by both local congregations and the general church for General Conference approval; resourcing understanding of our doctrines; and resourcing local churches in engaging with the church’s social witness and social issues from a variety of political perspectives and from a biblical foundation.

3. Ministry – including, but not limited to, implementing the standards and qualifications set for various forms of ministry; developing curricula for ministry training courses, including Course of Study; resourcing annual conference boards of ministry; ensuring adequate psychological and background evaluation for candidates; establishing and refining criteria and qualifications for various forms of non-parish ministry; evaluating and approving training programs that meet the criteria and qualifications; examining and credentialing persons for various forms of non-parish ministry; and supporting persons engaging in non-parish ministry.

4. Communications – including, but not limited to, resourcing local churches, annual conferences, and the general church in communication strategy and implementation; creating print and digital resources that communicate the work of the church; publishing the *Book of Doctrines and Disciplines*; translating communications and resources into the languages of the church; and growing the digital communication capability of the church.

5. Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits – including, but not limited to, overseeing the financial and fiduciary life of the general church to insure both its integrity and efficiency; reporting publicly the detailed expenses and income; conducting an annual independent audit; collecting and distributing all income received by the general church; managing the legal work of the general church; giving oversight to the pension and benefits (i.e., health insurance, disability, etc.) programs for clergy and lay employees of the church worldwide; and encouraging conferences worldwide to provide adequate pension funding and medical care for those who serve in the church’s ministry (active and retired).

6. Transitional commissions may also be formed in other areas not named above and assigned responsibility to develop policies and programs related to those other areas.

¶ 706. THE TRANSITIONAL CONNECTIONAL OPERATING OFFICER. The transitional connectional operating officer shall bear primary responsibility for the fruitful and accountable functioning of the general church and serve as its chief executive and administrative officer. The transitional connectional operating officer shall be directly amenable to the Transitional Leadership Council. The transitional connectional operating officer shall assign staff to support and resource any general commission and provide oversight to all general church staff.

1. *Selection.* The transitional connectional operating officer may be either a clergy or lay person and shall be selected by the Transitional Leadership Council by majority vote of the Council.

2. *Term.* The transitional connectional operating officer serves at the pleasure of the Transitional Leadership Council or until the convening General Conference adjourns and leadership for the season immediately after the convening General Conference is selected.

3. *Responsibilities and Duties.* The responsibilities of the transitional connectional operating officer shall include the following:

a. Serve as the general church's chief executive and administrative officer and oversee all connectional commissions and enterprises.

b. Oversee planning and research to advance and implement the mission and strategic plan of the church.

c. Serve as the staff person for the Transitional Leadership Council in assisting the Council in all its work, but especially to provide a unified sense of vision and mission for all the work of the denomination.

d. Along with the Transitional Leadership Council, coordinate the ministries of the general church to fulfill the mandates of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and to implement the actions of the General Conference.

e. Review and evaluate the missional effectiveness of the transitional general commissions of the church, making recommendations to the Council.

f. In consultation with the Transitional Commission on Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits, prepare the proposed connectional budget for the Transitional Leadership Council approval and, once approved, oversee its implementation, including, but not limited to, overseeing connectional finances and the maintenance of financial records.

g. Oversee yearly audits of connectional financial records.

h. Direct the development of policies and procedures to implement the provisions of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, including but not limited to personnel matters.

i. Direct and/or oversee connectional communications, public relations, and marketing.

j. Serve as the chief spokesperson for the denomination to the extent authorized by the Transitional Leadership Council.

k. With appropriate consultation, manage the process for and make the final decision on hiring, assigning, and retaining all general church staff, supervise and direct all general church staff, including performance reviews in consultation with the relevant commission(s), recommend compensation levels for all program staff for Transitional Leadership Council approval, and set compensation levels for all support staff. All processes shall comply with the policies and procedures adopted by the Transitional Leadership Council.

l. Negotiate and/or oversee negotiation of contracts for services including, but not limited to, facilities, connectional pension, insurance, and other benefit programs, with the approval of the relevant commission.

m. Recommend to General Conference through the Connectional Council changes to the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and implementing legislation.

n. Carry out other responsibilities and duties assigned by the General Conference or the Connectional Council.

PART EIGHT JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

¶ **801. ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE CHURCH.** Founded in the gospel call to faithfulness, and as set forth in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, ordination in the Global Methodist Church and membership in an annual conference is a sacred trust. As such, individual clergy, whether in active ministry, honorable or administrative location, or in senior status, are accountable to the whole church for their behavior and actions as long as they hold orders within the denomination. Similarly, numerous passages within the New Testament remind us of the sacred call given to all those in the church to watch over one another in love, stirring each to faithfulness and sanctification. Individuals accused of violating the canons of this covenant shall thus be subject to a review aimed at a just resolution of such complaints, in the hope that God's work of justice, reconciliation, and healing may be realized in the body of Christ. The provisions that follow shall govern this accountability process during the time between the forming of the Global Methodist Church and the effective date of any legislation passed by the convening General Conference designed to replace them.

¶ **802. JUDICIAL PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES.** The Transitional Leadership Council shall approve the *Judicial Practices and Procedures (JPP)* that govern the complaint, supervisory, administrative, and judicial processes. Such JPP shall have the force of church law, but not be included in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. In the event of a conflict between the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and the JPP, the *Book Doctrines and Discipline* shall govern.

Section I – Complaints

¶ **803. COMPLAINTS.** The process of accountability is initiated when a formal complaint is filed. A complaint is a written and signed statement alleging misconduct as defined in ¶ 808.1-2 (a judicial complaint) or unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties (an administrative complaint, ¶¶ 806-807). If the complaint is against a bishop, the complaint shall be submitted to the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council. If the complaint is against a pastor, the complaint shall be submitted to that pastor's presiding elder and bishop (or to a president *pro tempore* in the absence of an assigned bishop). If the complaint is against a local church member, the complaint shall be submitted to the presiding elder over that local church. The person authorized to receive the complaint or their designee shall handle the complaint throughout its process. Upon receiving a complaint, the duly authorized recipient shall describe the complaint process in writing both to the person making the complaint ("complainant") and the person against whom the complaint is made ("respondent"). As the complaint process progresses, the duly authorized recipient of the complaint shall continue to describe in writing to the complainant and recipient new parts of the process in a timely fashion. All original time limitations may be extended only once for 30 days upon the consent of the complainant and the respondent.

¶ **804. JUST RESOLUTION.** Complaints may be resolved during the supervisory response stage by a just resolution. A just resolution is one that focuses on repairing any harm to people and communities, achieving real accountability, making things right in so far as possible, and bringing healing to all the parties. With the agreement of all parties to the complaint, the assistance of a trained, impartial third-party facilitator(s) or mediator(s) may be utilized to seek a just resolution satisfactory to all parties. Special attention should be given to ensuring that cultural, racial, ethnic and gender contexts are valued throughout the process in terms of their understandings of fairness,

justice, and restoration. A resolution of the complaint at the supervisory response level shall involve a written statement of the allegations, a list of all parties to the complaint, determination of facts, elucidation of context, and plan of action or agreed penalty to address the allegations, including follow-up accountability. Any just resolution that involves an allegation of disobedience to a provision of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* shall include a commitment by the respondent to abide by all applicable disciplinary requirements, including those alleged to have been violated. Such a resolution shall not be imposed, but must be voluntarily agreed to and signed by all parties to the complaint, including as a minimum the complainant, the respondent, and the person authorized to receive the complaint (§ 803). Such a resolution shall be placed in the respondent's personnel file. A just resolution agreed to by all parties shall be a final disposition of the related complaint.

¶ 805. PRINCIPLES OF FAIR PROCESS. As a part of the holy covenant that exists within the membership and organization of the Global Methodist Church, the following procedures protect the rights of individuals and the church in administrative and judicial processes. The principles set forth in this paragraph shall be followed whenever there is an administrative or judicial complaint. Special attention shall be given to the timely disposition of all matters and to ensuring racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in the committees dealing with complaints.

1. *Right to Be Heard.* The person authorized to receive the complaint or their designee, the complainant, and the respondent shall have a right to be heard before any final action is taken at any stage in the process.

2. *Right to Notice.* The respondent and complainant have the right to notice of any hearing with sufficient detail to allow the respondent to prepare a response. Notice shall be given not less than twenty (20) days prior to the hearing.

3. *Right to Presence and Accompaniment.* The respondent and the complainant shall have a right to be present at all hearings and the right to be accompanied to any hearing by a support person with the right to voice. The support person shall be a member of the Global Methodist Church. Under no circumstances shall the church award compensation for or reimbursement of any expenses or fees associated with the respondent's or complainant's use of an attorney.

4. *Access to Records.* The respondent shall have access, at least ten (10) days prior to any hearing, to all records to be relied upon in the determination of the outcome of the process, including the written texts of the complaints themselves.

5. *Ex Parte Communication.* Under no circumstances shall one party, in the absence of the other party, discuss substantive issues with members of the body hearing the pending matter, or with each other, with the exception of ¶ 805.6. Questions of procedure may be raised with the presiding officer of the hearing body, with the answers shared with all parties.

6. *Failure to Respond.* In the event that a respondent fails to appear for supervisory interviews, refuses mail, refuses to communicate personally with the person handling the complaint or their designee, or otherwise fails to respond to supervisory requests or requests from official committees, such actions or inactions shall not be used as an excuse to avoid or delay any church processes, and such processes may continue without the participation of such individual.

7. *Healing.* As a part of the accountability process, the bishop and cabinet, in consultation with the presiding officer of the hearing, trial, or appellate body hearing the pending matter, shall provide resources for healing if there has been significant disruption to the congregation, the annual conference, or the context of ministry by the matter. Resources for healing shall include communication about the complaint and the process and the release of as much information as possible, without compromising the process.

8. *Double Jeopardy.* No person shall be subject to double jeopardy. This means, barring new compelling information or facts, no complaint shall be accepted for the same alleged offenses based

on the same set of facts, when a similar complaint has already been adjudicated via just resolution or final action by an administrative or judicial body. For this paragraph, “new compelling information or facts” means information or facts not introduced in the original judicial or administrative process that more likely than not would affect the findings of the hearing body. This does not preclude filing a new complaint for new instances of the same offense.

9. *Immunity From Prosecution* – To preserve the integrity of the church’s process and ensure full participation at all times, the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council, the bishop, president *pro tempore*, cabinet, Board of Ministry, witnesses, support persons, counsel, administrative review committee, clergy voting in executive session, and all others who participate in the church’s process shall have immunity from prosecution of complaints brought against them related to their role in a particular process, unless they have committed a chargeable offense in conscious and knowing bad faith. The complainant/plaintiff in any proceeding against any such person related to their role in a particular judicial process shall have the burden of proving, by clear and convincing evidence, that such person’s actions constituted a chargeable offense committed knowingly in bad faith. The immunity set forth in this provision shall extend to civil court proceedings, to the fullest extent permissible by the civil laws.

10. *Counsel for the Church* – No person who was a member of the Transitional Leadership Council, cabinet, conference staff, Board of Ministry, or committee on investigation on or after the date of the alleged offense shall be appointed counsel for the Church or serve as counsel for the respondent or any of the persons bringing complaints in a case. By agreeing to serve, the counsel for the Church signifies his or her willingness to uphold the requirements of Church law and the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Counsel for the Church shall represent the interests of the Church in pressing the claims of the person making the complaint.

¶ 806. ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS CONCERNING CLERGY. An administrative complaint involves allegations of the unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties through incompetence, ineffectiveness, or unwillingness or inability to perform such duties. Allegations of professional or personal misconduct shall not be handled through an administrative complaint but through the provisions of ¶ 808.1-2. Administrative complaints may be filed by laypersons who are within the scope of a respondent’s ministry, other clergy familiar with the respondent’s ministry, the presiding elder), the president *pro tempore*, or the bishop. The complaint shall contain specific examples of unsatisfactory performance, including at least approximate dates and times (if appropriate).

1. Processing of an administrative complaint shall be governed by the *JPP* 2 and 3, and shall include an administrative supervisory response, which shall be followed, if warranted, by an investigative response, an administrative review, and an appeal.

2. There shall be an administrative review committee in every annual conference composed of three ordained clergy and two alternates who are not members of the cabinet, the Board of Ministry, or immediate family members of the above. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character. The committee shall be nominated by the bishop and elected by the clergy session of the annual conference. Its only purpose shall be to ensure that the disciplinary procedures for resolving a substantiated administrative complaint are properly followed as per the requirements of the *JPP* 2 and 3, and fair process (¶ 805).

3. *Expenses.* All expenses for the administrative process for clergy shall be borne by the annual conference, except for travel and other expenses of the respondent and their support person.

¶ 807. ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS CONCERNING BISHOPS. An administrative complaint involves allegations of the unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties through

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incompetence, ineffectiveness, or unwillingness or inability to perform such duties. Allegations of professional or personal misconduct shall not be handled through an administrative complaint but through the provisions of ¶ 808.1-2. Administrative complaints may be filed by laypersons, clergy, and presiding elders in the annual conference in which the bishop is serving, the conference committee on episcopacy, or another bishop. The complaint shall contain specific examples of unsatisfactory performance, including at least approximate dates and times (if appropriate). The supervisory process shall be administered by the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council or their designee. All expenses for the administrative process for complaints involving bishops shall be borne by the general church. The process for an administrative complaint against a bishop shall be governed by JPP 3.

¶ 808. JUDICIAL COMPLAINTS. A judicial complaint involves allegations of misconduct as enumerated in the chargeable offenses below. Such complaints may be filed by any layperson or clergy person, a presiding elder, or a bishop. The complaint shall contain specific allegations of misconduct, including at least approximate dates and times (if appropriate).

1. *Chargeable Offenses* – A bishop or clergy member of an annual conference, including senior clergy and clergy on honorable or administrative location, may be tried when charged (subject to the statute of limitations listed below) with one or more of the following offenses:

- a. Conviction or admission of guilt in criminal activities, including but not limited to child or elder abuse, theft, or assault;
- b. Fiscal malfeasance or gross financial mismanagement;
- c. Racial, gender, or sexual discrimination or harassment;
- d. Promoting or engaging in doctrines or practices, or conducting ceremonies or services, that are not in accord with those established by the Global Methodist Church;
- e. Disobedience to the order and discipline of the Global Methodist Church;
- f. Relationships and/or behavior that undermines the ministry of another pastor;
- g. Engaging in sexual activities outside the bonds of a loving and monogamous marriage between one man and one woman, including but not limited to sexual abuse or misconduct, the use or possession of pornography, or infidelity.

2. A professing member of a local church may be charged (subject to the statute of limitations listed below) with the following offenses:

- h. Conviction or admission of guilt in criminal activities, including but not limited to child or elder abuse, theft, or assault;
- i. Fiscal malfeasance or gross financial mismanagement;
- j. Racial, gender, or sexual discrimination or harassment;
- k. Promoting or engaging in doctrines or practices that are not in accord with those established by the Global Methodist Church;
- l. Disobedience to the order and discipline of the Global Methodist Church;
- m. Relationships and/or behavior that undermines the ministry of a pastor;

3. *Statute of Limitations* – No judicial complaint or charge shall be considered for any alleged occurrence that shall not have been committed within six years immediately preceding the filing of the original complaint. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the case of allegations of sexual or child abuse or crime involving allegations of sexual or child abuse, there shall be no statute of limitation. Time spent on leave of absence shall not be considered as part of the six years.

4. *Time of Offense* – A person shall not be charged with an offense that was not a chargeable offense at the time it is alleged to have been committed. Any charge filed shall be in the language of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* in effect at the time the offense is alleged to have occurred, except in the case of sexual or child abuse or crime involving sexual or child abuse. Then it shall be in the

language of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* in effect at the time the charge was filed. Any charge must relate to an action listed as a chargeable offense in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.

5. *If the respondent is a bishop*, the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council shall make the conference episcopacy committee where the bishop presides (if any) and all active bishops and presidents *pro tempore* aware of the complaint and keep them apprised of its progress.

¶ 809. JUDICIAL SUPERVISORY RESPONSE. 1. The purpose of the judicial supervisory response is to, so far as possible, establish facts, consider circumstances and explanations, determine if there is an issue that merits action, and arrive at a resolution of the complaint that restores compliance and redresses any harms resulting from a violation. Processing of a judicial complaint shall be governed by JPP 4. If the respondent is a bishop, the supervisory process shall be administered by the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council or their designee (¶ 811.1). The supervisory response shall result in one of three possible outcomes, including the dismissal or resolution of the complaint or a referral to the committee on investigation (JPP 4.4).

2. *Suspension.* To avoid harm to the church or ministry setting or to the respondent, the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council with the affirmative vote of a majority of the Transitional Leadership Council (if the respondent is a bishop) or the bishop with the affirmative vote of a majority of the cabinet (if the respondent is clergy) may suspend the respondent from all ministry responsibilities during the supervisory and investigative process for a judicial complaint. The respondent retains all rights and privileges, including continuation of housing, salary, and benefits, while suspended from ministerial duties, provided, however, that they shall not interfere with an interim bishop or pastor appointed to carry out their duties while they are suspended. If the judicial complaint does not proceed to trial, the respondent's suspension must be lifted at that time.

Section II – Investigative Response

¶ 810. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION.

1. *When respondent is a bishop*—The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint a global committee on investigation as provided in JPP 5.

2. *When the respondent is a clergy person* -- Each annual conference shall elect a committee on investigation to consider judicial complaints against clergy members of the annual conference in accordance with ¶ 612.5.

3. *When respondent is a layperson*—In all cases, the pastor or presiding elder should take pastoral steps to resolve any complaints (JPP 4). If such pastoral response does not result in resolution and a written complaint is made against a professing member for any of the offenses in ¶ 808.2, the presiding elder and the district lay leader (if any), shall appoint a committee on investigation consisting of four professing members and three clergy in full connection to serve only for this complaint. Both clergy and professing members must come from other congregations, exclusive of the churches of the respondent or the complainant. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character. The committee should reflect racial, ethnic, and gender diversity. Five members shall constitute a quorum.

¶ 811. REFERRAL OF A COMPLAINT TO A COUNSEL FOR THE CHURCH.

1. *When the respondent is a bishop*

a. The chair of the Transitional Leadership Council or their designee shall handle the supervisory response as per the JPP 4.2. If a just resolution is not agreed to and the complaint is not dismissed, the chair or their designee shall notify all active bishops, presidents *pro tempore*, and the

relevant conference episcopacy committee (if any) of the existence and nature of the complaint and appoint counsel under JPP 6.1.

b. If six or more members of the committee on investigation so recommend, the Transitional Leadership Council may suspend the respondent, with continuation of housing, salary, and benefits, from all episcopal duties and responsibilities pending the conclusion of the trial process

2. When the respondent is a clergy person

a. If a just resolution is not agreed to and the complaint is not dismissed, the bishop shall notify the pastor-parish relations committee of the existence and nature of the complaint. Within thirty (30) days, the bishop shall appoint an elder within the annual conference in which the alleged violation took place who shall serve as counsel for the Church under JPP 6.2.

b. If five or more members of the committee on investigation so recommend, the bishop may suspend the respondent, with continuation of housing, salary, and benefits, from all duties and responsibilities relating to their appointment pending the conclusion of the trial process. The respondent retains all rights and privileges as a member of the annual conference while suspended from pastoral duties, provided, however, they shall not interfere with an interim pastor appointed to carry out their duties while they are suspended.

3. When the respondent is a layperson

a. If a just resolution is not agreed to and the complaint is not dismissed, the presiding elder, shall within thirty (30) days appoint a Global Methodist Church clergy or layperson to serve as counsel for the church under JPP 6.3.

b. If five or more members of the committee on investigation so recommend, the pastor or presiding elder may suspend the respondent from exercising any church office pending the conclusion of the trial process.

¶ 812. COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES.

1. *Introduction* – The role of the committee on investigation is to conduct an investigation into the allegations made in the judicial complaint and to determine if reasonable grounds exist to bring a bill of charges and specifications to trial. Reasonable grounds is defined as sufficient reason based on the known facts to believe that a chargeable offense has been committed. If so, it shall prepare, sign, and certify a bill of charges and specifications. The committee's duty is only to determine whether reasonable grounds exist to support the charges. It is not the committee's duty to determine guilt or innocence.

2. The investigation process shall be administered according to the provisions of the JPP 7.

Section III – Trials

¶ 813. GENERAL ORGANIZATION AND PRE-TRIAL PROCEDURES.

1. *Fundamental Principles for Trials* – Church trials are to be regarded as an expedient of last resort. Only after every reasonable effort has been made to correct any wrong and adjust any existing difficulty should steps be taken to institute a trial. No such trial as herein provided shall be construed to deprive the respondent or the Church of legal civil rights, except to the extent that immunity is provided as in ¶ 805.9. All trials shall be conducted according to the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* in a consistent Christian manner by a properly constituted court after due investigation. Trials shall be administered under the provisions of the JPP 8-13.

¶ 814. CONVENING OF A TRIAL COURT.

1. In the trial of a bishop, the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council shall proceed to convene the court under the provisions of the JPP 9 and 11.

2. In the trial of a clergy member, the bishop of the respondent shall proceed to convene the court under the provisions of the JPP 9 and 12.

3. In a trial of a lay member, the presiding elder of the respondent shall proceed to convene the court under the provisions of the JPP 9 and 13.

¶ 815. POWER OF THE TRIAL COURT.

1. *Instruction, Disqualification, Voting, and Verdicts* – The trial court shall have full power to try the respondent. The trial court shall be a continuing body until the final disposition of the charge. If any regular or alternate member of the trial court fails to attend any part of any session at which evidence is received or oral argument is made to the trial court by counsel, that person shall not thereafter be a member of the trial court, but the rest of the trial court may proceed to judgment.

2. *Votes* – A vote of at least nine members of the trial court is required to sustain the charge(s) and nine votes also shall be required for conviction, unless the number of the trial court falls below thirteen. (In that case, a two-thirds vote shall be required.) Fewer than nine votes for conviction shall be considered an acquittal. In order to be sustained, the church must establish each specification and the charge by clear and convincing evidence. In order for evidence to be clear and convincing, the evidence provided to the trial court must demonstrate that the specification is highly and substantially more likely to be true than untrue. The trial court shall present to the presiding officer a decision on each charge and each individual specification under each charge. Its findings shall be final, subject to appeal to the committee on appeals.

3. *Penalties – If the Trial Results in Conviction* – Further testimony may be heard and arguments by counsel presented regarding what the penalty should be. The trial court shall determine the penalty, which shall require a vote of at least seven members. (If the number of the trial court falls below thirteen, a majority vote shall be required.) The trial court shall have the power to remove the respondent from professing membership, terminate the conference membership, and revoke the credentials of conference membership, ordination, or consecration of the respondent, suspend the respondent from the exercise of the functions of office (with or without pay, if applicable) for a defined period of time, or fix a lesser penalty. The trial court shall determine whether a bishop or clergy person suspended from office as a penalty for a defined period of time shall have any continuation of housing, salary, and benefits during such suspension. The penalty fixed by the trial court shall take effect immediately unless otherwise indicated by the trial court. Should any penalty fixed by a trial court be altered or reduced as a result of the appellate process, the respondent shall be restored and/or compensated as appropriate by the general church if a bishop and by the annual conference if clergy, provided that in no instance and under no circumstances shall the respondent be entitled to receive an award of compensation for or reimbursement of any expenses or fees associated with the respondent's use of an attorney.

Section IV – Appeals

¶ 816. APPEAL PROCEDURES -- GENERAL.

1. In all cases of appeal, the appellant shall give written notice of appeal within thirty (30) days of the verdict and announcement of penalty by the trial court or the issuance of a written decision of an appellate body other than the Connectional Council on Appeals. At the same time the appellant shall furnish to the officer receiving such notice (JPP 14.2) and to the counsel for the

opposing party a written statement of the grounds of the appeal. The hearing in the appellate body shall be limited to the grounds set forth in such statement.

2. When any appellate body shall reverse in whole or in part the findings of a committee on investigation or trial court, or remand the case for a new hearing or trial, or change the penalty imposed by the trial court, it shall return to the convening officer a statement of the grounds of its action, which shall also be copied to the respondent, complainant, and counsel for the church.

3. An appeal shall not be allowed in any case in which the respondent has failed or refused to be present in person or by counsel at the investigation and the trial. Appeals shall be heard by the proper appellate body unless it shall appear to the said body that the appellant has forfeited the right to appeal by misconduct, such as refusal to abide by the findings of the trial court; or by withdrawal from the Church; or by failure to appear in person or by counsel to prosecute the appeal; or, prior to the final decision on appeal from conviction, by resorting to suit in the civil courts against the complainant or any of the parties connected with the ecclesiastical court in which the appellant was tried.

4. The right of appeal, when once forfeited by neglect or otherwise, cannot be revived by any subsequent appellate body.

5. The right to prosecute an appeal shall not be affected by the death of the person entitled to such right. Heirs or legal representatives may prosecute such appeal as the appellant would be entitled to do if living.

6. The records and documents of the trial, including the evidence, and these only, shall be used in the hearing of any appeal.

7. The appellate body shall determine two questions only:

a. Were the charge(s) sustained by clear and convincing evidence?

b. Were there such errors of Church law as to vitiate the verdict and/or the penalty?

These questions shall be determined from the records of the trial. The appellate body shall in no case hear witnesses, but shall receive and/or hear argument of the counsel for the Church and respondent. It may have legal counsel present, who shall not be the conference chancellor for the conference from which the appeal is taken, for the sole purpose of providing advice to the appellate body.

8. In all cases where an appeal is made and admitted by the appellate committee, after the charges, findings, and evidence have been read and the arguments concluded, the parties shall withdraw, and the appellate committee shall consider and decide the case. It may reverse in whole or in part the findings of the committee on investigation or the trial court, or it may remand the case for a new trial to determine verdict and/or penalty. It may determine what penalty, not higher than that affixed at the hearing or trial, may be imposed. If it neither reverses in whole or in part the judgment of the trial court, nor remands the case for a new trial, nor modifies the penalty, that judgment shall stand, subject to possible appeal to the Connectional Council on Appeals. The appellate committee shall not reverse the judgment nor remand the case for a new hearing or trial on account of errors plainly not affecting the result. All decisions of the appellate committee shall require a majority vote.

9. In all cases, the right to present evidence shall be exhausted when the case has been heard once on its merits in the trial court, but questions of Church law may be carried on appeal, step by step, to the Connectional Council on Appeals (§ 824.8-9).

10. The Church shall have no right of appeal from findings of fact of the trial court. The Church shall have a right of appeal to the committee on appeals and then to the Connectional Council on Appeals from findings of the committee on investigation or trial court based on egregious errors of Church law or administration that could reasonably have affected its findings. In this paragraph, “egregious errors of Church law or administration” refers to the misunderstanding,

misinterpretation, misapplication, or violation (whether knowing or not) of Church law or judicial process as required by the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, with such errors more likely than not (in the judgment of the appellate body) affecting the findings of the trial court or committee on investigation. The committee on investigation's decision not to certify a bill of charges does not alone constitute an egregious error of Church law or administration. When the committee on appeals shall find egregious errors of Church law or administration under this part, it may remand the case for a new hearing or trial on verdict and/or penalty, in which event it shall return to the chair of the committee on investigation or presiding officer of the trial court a statement of the grounds of its action. This action is not to be considered double jeopardy.

11. Questions of procedure may be raised with the presiding officer or secretary of the appellate body, with the answers shared with all parties. Under no circumstances shall one party in the absence of the other party discuss substantive matters with members of any appellate body while the case is pending (§ 805.5, 805.6).

12. The appeal of a bishop or clergy member shall be administered according to the provisions of the JPP 14.

13. The appeal of a lay member shall be administered according to the provisions of the JPP 15.

¶ 817. APPEAL OF QUESTIONS OF LAW.

1. The order of appeals on questions of law shall be as follows:

a. From the decision of the presiding elder (district superintendent) presiding in the charge or district conference to the bishop presiding in the annual conference and then to the Connectional Council on Appeals;

b. From the decision of the bishop presiding in the annual conference to the Connectional Council on Appeals;

c. From the bishop presiding in a regional conference to the Connectional Council on Appeals; and

d. From the bishop presiding in the General Conference to the Connectional Council on Appeals.

2. When a question of law is raised in writing during a session of a conference. It shall be the secretary's duty to see that an exact statement of the question submitted and the ruling of the chair thereon shall be entered on the journal and minutes of the conference. The secretary shall then make and certify a copy of the question and ruling and transmit the same to the person or body to which an appeal is taken.

¶ 818. APPEAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS (see ¶ 806).

1. The order of appeals on procedures in an administrative process shall be as follows:

a. From the decision of the Board of Ministry investigative committee to the annual conference administrative review committee;

b. From the administrative review committee to the full Board of Ministry; and

c. From the full Board of Ministry to the clergy session.

d. Questions of law arising from an administrative process should be raised in the clergy session for ruling by the bishop and review by the Connectional Council on Appeals.

2. In all cases of such an appeal, the appellant shall within thirty (30) days give written notice of appeal and at the same time furnish to the officer receiving such notice a written statement of the grounds of appeal, and the hearing in the appellate body shall be limited to the grounds set forth in such statement.

3. The appellate body shall return to the convening officer of the administrative hearing and to the appellant a written statement of the grounds of its action, which shall also be placed in the appellant's personnel file.

4. An appeal shall not be allowed in any case in which the respondent has failed or refused to be present in person or by counsel during the administrative hearing. Appeals shall be heard by the proper appellate body unless it shall appear to the said body that the appellant has forfeited the right to appeal by misconduct; by withdrawal from the Church; by failure to appear in person or by counsel to prosecute the appeal; or, prior to the final decision on appeal by resorting to suit in the civil courts against any of the parties connected with the ecclesiastical administrative process.

5. The right to appeal, when once forfeited by neglect or otherwise, cannot be revived by any subsequent appellate body.

6. The right to prosecute an appeal shall not be affected by the death of the person entitled to such right. Heirs of legal representatives may prosecute such appeal as the appellant would be entitled to do if living.

7. The records and documents of the administrative process, including any evidence, and these only, shall be used in the hearing of any appeal.

8. The appellate body shall determine one question only: Were there such errors of Church law or procedure as to vitiate the recommendation and/or action of the administrative body? The records of the administrative process and the arguments of the official representatives of all parties shall determine this question. The appellate body shall in no case hear witnesses. It may have legal counsel present for the sole purpose of providing advice to the appellate body.

9. If the appellate body determines that any error has occurred, it may recommend to the appropriate person or body that action be taken promptly to remedy the error, decide the error is harmless, or take other action. The appellate committee shall not reverse the judgment nor remand the case for a new hearing on account of error plainly not affecting the result. All decisions of the appellate committee shall require a majority vote.

10. In all cases, the right to present evidence shall be exhausted when the case has been heard once on its merits in the proper administrative hearing body, but the decision of the administrative hearing body may be appealed as outlined in ¶ 819.1. Questions on Church law may be raised in the clergy session and carried on appeal to the Connectional Council on Appeals (¶ 819.1d).

11. Questions of procedure may be raised with the presiding officer or secretary of the appellate body, with the answers shared with all parties. Under no circumstances shall one party in the absence of the other party discuss substantive matters with members of any appellate body while the case is pending.

Section V – Summary and Other Provisions

¶ 819. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

1. Any clergy members residing beyond the bounds of the conference in which membership is held shall be subject to the procedures of ¶¶ 801-819 and the JPP exercised by the appropriate officers of the conference in which the alleged violation took place, unless the presiding bishops of the two annual conferences and the clergy member subject to the procedures agree that fairness will be better served by having the procedures carried out by the appropriate officers of the annual conference in which he or she is a member, or if the clergy person has elected senior status, where they are currently residing.

2. When a bishop or clergy member is the respondent to a complaint under ¶¶ 806-807 and desires to withdraw from the Global Methodist Church at any point in the process, the bishop or

clergy member shall surrender his or her credentials and his or her name shall be removed from conference membership; in which case the record shall be “Withdrawn under complaint” or “Withdrawn under charges,” whichever is appropriate. If the person desires their credentials to be restored, they would first have to resolve the complaint, with the complaint process picking up at the point at which it ended when they withdrew. Time spent as “withdrawn under complaint or charges” does not count toward the statute of limitations (§ 808.3).

3. When a professing member of the Global Methodist Church is charged with an offense and desires to withdraw from the Global Methodist Church at any point in the process, the charge conference may permit such member to withdraw his or her name from the roll of professing members, in which case the record shall be “Withdrawn under complaint.” If formal charges have been referred by a committee on investigation, such member may be permitted to withdraw, in which case the record shall be “Withdrawn under charges.” If the person desires to be restored as a professing member (or become a professing member in another local congregation of the Global Methodist Church), they would first have to resolve the complaint, with the complaint process picking up at the point at which it ended when they withdrew.

4. For procedural purposes, the judicial process shall be governed by the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and the JPP in effect on the date a complaint is forwarded to the counsel for the Church.

Section VI – Connectional Council on Appeals.

¶ 820. MEMBERSHIP. 1. The Connectional Council on Appeals is the highest judicial body in the Global Methodist Church. The Council shall be composed of seven members. When the initial Council is elected by the convening General Conference, four members shall be clergy and three members shall be laity. A member’s term of office shall be six years. A member may serve a maximum of two consecutive six-year terms. The number of clergy and laity shall alternate every six years so that the clergy have the four members during one six-year term and the laity have the four members during the next six-year term. Members shall either be elders or laity who are professing members of the Global Methodist Church. Bishops shall be ineligible for election to the Council.

2. *Interim Council Appointment.* The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint by majority vote the persons to serve on an interim Connectional Council on Appeals. Clergy and laity shall be appointed to serve as alternates in a number equal to the number to serve on the interim Connectional Council on Appeals. Alternates shall serve in their category at any session of the Council in the absence of a member of the Council in the order of their election. Members of the interim Council may be nominated to be elected by the convening General Conference. Any time served on the interim Council shall not count against term limits set by the convening General Conference.

3. *Alternates.* Clergy and laity shall be elected to serve as alternates in a number equal to the number to serve on the Connectional Council on Appeals during the ensuing six-year term. Alternates shall serve in their category at any session of the Council in the absence of a member of the Council in the order of their election. In the event a member of the Council cannot serve the balance of a term, the next elected alternate in the category impacted shall serve the balance of the term and such service shall not count against the maximum time of serving.

4. *Expiration of Term.* The term of office of the members of the Connectional Council on Appeals and of the alternates shall expire upon the adjournment of the General Conference at which their successors are elected.

5. *Ineligibility.* Members of the Connectional Council on Appeals shall be ineligible to serve as delegates to the General or any regional conferences, or to serve on any general, regional or annual conference board or commission.

6. *Nominations*. In advance of the convening General Conference, the Transitional Leadership Council shall nominate by majority vote a total of 21 persons representing the church's geographic, ethnic, and gender diversity in the appropriate lay and clergy categories. On the first day of the General Conference, nominations of clergy or laity may be made from the floor. Name, annual conference membership and biographical information not to exceed 100 words shall be published for review by delegates to the General Conference at least forty-eight hours prior to the time of election. Election shall occur without discussion or debate, by ballot and majority vote.

¶ **821. ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE.** 1. *Connectional Council on Appeals Rules of Practice & Procedure and Officers* – The Connectional Council on Appeals shall provide its own rules of practice and procedure not in conflict with the provisions of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, including the election of a President, Vice-President, and Secretary of the Council, who shall be elected by the members of the Council.

2. *Time & Place of Meeting* – The Connectional Council on Appeals shall meet at the time and place of the meeting of the General Conference and shall continue until the adjournment of that body, at least one other time in each calendar year, and at other times as the Council may deem appropriate, and at such places as it deems appropriate from time to time. Where necessary due to international or local conditions that prevent the physical assembling of the Council, it may, by a two-thirds vote, decide to meet via electronic or other digital means.

3. *Quorum* – Seven members or alternates duly seated shall constitute a quorum. One lay and one clergy alternate shall attend the meeting to be available in case of illness or recusal. An affirmative vote of at least five members or duly seated alternates shall be necessary to declare any act of the General Conference unconstitutional. On all other matters, a majority vote of the entire Connectional Council on Appeals shall be sufficient to arrive at a decision.

4. *Docket* – The secretary of the Connectional Council on Appeals shall publish a list of the matters which will be decided at any session at least thirty (30) days prior to the deadline for submission of briefs. The description of each matter pending shall be sufficient to enable persons who might file briefs to know the subject of the pending matter.

5. *Public Access* – Unless the Connectional Council on Appeals decides otherwise on a case-by-case basis, all materials filed with the Connectional Council on Appeals are matters of public record and are to be made available to clergy or members of the Global Methodist Church. The deliberations of the Council are private. The Council may schedule a hearing open to the public for the presentation of oral argument in any matter.

¶ **822. JURISDICTION.** 1. The Connectional Council on Appeals shall determine whether any act of the General Conference is in compliance with this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* upon an appeal of one-fifth of the members of the General Conference present and voting, or by a majority of the Council of Bishops.

2. The Connectional Council on Appeals shall determine whether any proposed legislation is in conflict with this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* when such a declaratory decision is requested by one-fifth of the members of the General Conference presenting and voting, or by a majority of the Council of Bishops.

3. The Connectional Council on Appeals shall determine whether any act of a regional or annual conference is in compliance with this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* upon an appeal by a majority of the bishops of that regional conference or upon appeal by one-fifth of the delegates present and voting to that regional or annual conference.

4. The Connectional Council on Appeals shall determine the legality of any action taken by any body created or authorized by the General Conference or by any body created or authorized by

a regional or annual conference upon appeal by one-fifth of the delegates presenting and voting of such General, regional or annual conference, or one-third of the governing members of the created or authorized body present and voting, or a majority of the Council of Bishops or the bishops of the regional conference wherein the action was taken.

5. The Connectional Council on Appeals may grant certiorari to determine the legality of any action taken by a body or agency created or authorized by the General, regional, or annual conference upon petition for certiorari by one-fifth of the delegates present and voting of any regional or annual conference.

6. The Connectional Council on Appeals may grant certiorari to render a declaratory decision as to the meaning, application, or effect of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or any portion thereof or the legality, meaning, application, or effect of any act or legislation of a regional, or annual conference. Petitions for certiorari may be filed by (a) the General Conference upon the vote of one-fifth of the delegates present and voting, (b) the Council of Bishops upon the vote of a majority of the bishops present and voting, (c) any body created or authorized by the General Conference or a regional or annual conference on matters relating to or affecting the work of such body upon the vote of a majority of the body's governing entity present and voting, and (d) a regional or annual conference upon the vote of one-fifth of its delegates present and voting, or (e) the regional college of bishops upon the majority vote of the bishops present and voting.

7. The Connectional Council on Appeals shall affirm, modify, or reverse the decisions of law made by bishops in annual, regional, or General Conference. No such episcopal decision of law shall be authoritative, except in the conference where it is made, until review by the Council has been completed.

8. The Connectional Council on Appeals may grant certiorari to review a decision of a committee of appeals of any regional or annual conference if it should appear that such decision may be at variance with the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, a prior decision of the Connectional Council on Appeals, or a decision of a committee on appeals of another regional or annual conference on a question of Church law.

9. The Connectional Council on Appeals shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine all appeals from a regional appeals committee on a judicial matter (JPP 14.1 and 15.5).

¶ **823. CERTIORARI.** Certiorari is discretionary and is granted upon the affirmative vote of three members of the Connectional Council on Appeals.

¶ **824. DECISIONS.** All decisions of the Connectional Council on Appeals are final. Decisions shall immediately be delivered to the parties of interest in each matter and be published electronically for public review.

¶ **825. PRECEDENTIAL VALUE.** The decisions of predecessor Methodist bodies such as the Judicial Councils of The Methodist Church and of The United Methodist Church may be cited in arguments before the Connectional Council on Appeals but shall only have precedential value to the extent determined by the Connectional Council on Appeals.

PART NINE PROPERTY

¶ **901. THEOLOGY OF PROPERTY.** God owns all of creation (Psalm 50:9-10); we are but stewards of it for a period of time. Property (real, personal, tangible, and intangible) deeded or titled in the name of the Global Methodist Church and its entities (including its local churches) is to be used for the glory of God and to carry out the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ and to spread scriptural holiness across the land.

¶ **902. STEWARDSHIP OF ASSETS.** There is no trust clause for property held by local churches, annual conferences, regional conferences, connectional commissions, the Transitional Leadership Council, or any of their entities. Each local church, annual conference, regional conference, or connectional commission shall designate in its corporate records how its property shall be disposed of in the event of the entity's dissolution.

¶ **903. PROCESS OF DISSAFFILIATION.** After at least a 90-day period of discernment and prayer, a congregation of the Global Methodist Church may disaffiliate from the denomination by a majority vote of its church conference.

¶ **904. REGISTRATION OF THE NAME “GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH”.** The words “Global Methodist Church” are not to be used as, or as a part of, a trade name or trademark or as a part of the name of any business firm or organization, except by local churches, conferences, corporations, or other business units created for the administration of work undertaken directly by the Global Methodist Church. The Transitional Leadership Council or its successor is charged with supervision and registration of “Global Methodist Church” and the denomination's logo.

¶ **905. COMPLIANCE WITH LAW.** 1. *Conformity with local law.* All provisions of this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* relating to property, both real and personal, and relating to the formation and operation of any corporation, and relating to mergers are conditioned upon their being in conformity with local laws, and in the event of conflict with local law, local law shall prevail; provided, however, that this requirement shall not be construed to give the consent of the Global Methodist Church to deprivation of its property without due process of law or to the regulation of its affairs by state statute where such regulation violates any constitutional guarantees of freedom of religion and separation of church and state or violates the right of the church to maintain its connectional structure. Local laws shall be construed to mean the laws of the country, state, or other like political unit within the geographical bounds of which the church property is located.

2. *Incorporation Requirements.* Any corporation which is or has been formed or is affiliated with the Global Methodist Church, shall include in its articles of incorporation (or charter) and its bylaws the following:

- a. Recognition that its corporate powers are subject to this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*;
- b. Recognition that the corporation's powers cannot exceed those given by this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and language consistent with the taxation codes of the country in which the corporation operates to protect its tax-exempt status (if applicable); and
- c. Designation of the recipient(s) of corporate property in the event the corporation is abandoned, discontinued, or ceases to exist as a legal entity.

¶ 906. TRUSTEES AND DIRECTORS ARE SYNONYMOUS. The terms “trustee(s)” and “Board of Trustees” used in this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* may be construed to be synonymous with “director(s)” and “Board of Directors” applied to corporations. If a local church chooses an alternative structure, it shall designate which body shall act as the Board of Directors.

¶ 907. CONFORMITY OF DEEDS AND CONVEYANCES WITH LOCAL LAW. To secure the right of property of entities within the Global Methodist Church, care shall be taken that all conveyances and deeds be drawn and executed in due conformity to the laws of the respective states, provinces, and countries in which the property is situated and also in conformity with these *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Deeds shall be registered or recorded directly upon their execution.

¶ 908. INSTITUTING AND DEFENDING CIVIL ACTION. Because of the nature of the Global Methodist Church, no individual or affiliated church body or unit, nor any official thereof, may commence or participate in any suit or proceeding in the name of, or on behalf of, the Global Methodist Church, excepting, however, the following:

1. *Transitional Leadership Council or Its Successor* —The Transitional Leadership Council or its successor or any persons or church unit served with legal process in the name of the Global Methodist Church may appear for the purpose of presenting to the court the nonjural nature of the Global Methodist Church and to raise issues of lack of jurisdiction of the court, lack of capacity of such individual or unit to be served with process, and related constitutional issues in defense of denominational interests.

2. *Protecting Denominational Interests* — Any denominational unit authorized to hold title to property and to enforce trusts created by others for the benefit of the Global Methodist Church may bring suit in its own name to protect denominational interests.

¶ 909. LIMITATION OF FINANCIAL OBLIGATION. No local church, district, annual conference, regional conference, connectional commission, or any other unit can financially obligate the Global Methodist Church or, without prior specific written consent, any other organizational unit thereof.

¶ 910. AUDITS AND BONDING OF CHURCH OFFICERS. All persons holding trust funds, securities, or moneys of any kind belonging to a unit of the Global Methodist Church (not including a local church) shall be bonded by a reliable company in such good and sufficient sum as the Transitional Leadership Council or its designated agent or successor may direct. The accounts of such units shall be audited at least annually by a recognized public or certified public accountant. A report to a unit of the Global Methodist Church containing a financial statement that this *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline* requires to be audited shall not be approved until the audit is made and the financial statement is shown to be correct. Other parts of the report may be approved pending such audit.

¶ 911. GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH FOUNDATIONS. A regional or annual conference or conferences may establish a Global Methodist Church Foundation for its conference. The purposes for establishing such a foundation may include:

1. The promotion of planned giving programs on behalf of local churches, conferences, and other bodies within the Global Methodist Church;

2. Furnishing counsel and guidance to local churches with regard to promotion and management of permanent funds;

3. Receiving funds on deposit, investing said funds, and loaning funds for construction and renovation of local churches; and
4. Other responsibilities as requested by the annual conference.

All foundations shall have an independent governing board as determined by the incorporating documents approved by the annual conference. The governing board will establish all policies and procedures upon which the foundation will operate. Due care will be exercised to maintain prudent organizational separation from beneficiary organizations while striving to maintain missional purpose and connection.

¶ 912. POWERS OF BOARDS OF DIRECTORS. Each unit within the Global Methodist Church shall be incorporated unless local law prevents it. Each incorporated unit shall have a Board of Directors as set forth within this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. The Boards of Directors (or equivalent bodies) of each unit within the Global Methodist Church shall have the following authority with respect to their properties:

1. *Donations and bequests* — The said corporation shall receive, collect, and hold in trust for the benefit of the recipient any and all donations, bequests, and devises of any kind of character, real or personal, tangible or intangible, that may be given, devised, bequeathed, or conveyed to the said board for any benevolent, charitable, or religious purpose, and shall administer the same and the income therefrom in accordance with the directions of the donor, trustor, settlor, or testator and in the interest of the church, society, institution, or agency contemplated by such donor, trustor, settlor, or testator, under the direction of the corporation. When the use to be made of any such donation, bequest, or devise is not otherwise designated, the same shall be used as directed by the corporation.

2. *Holding property in trust* — When so directed by the Board of Directors, the corporation may receive and hold in trust for and on behalf of the respective unit of the Global Methodist Church any real or personal property previously acquired to be used in carrying out their mission, ministry, and program. When such property is in the form of investable assets, the Board of Directors may consider placing the assets for investment in the care of a responsible investing firm subject to the laws of the jurisdiction in which the unit is located. A conscious effort shall be made to invest in a manner consistent with the Social Witness (Part Two) of this *Doctrines and Discipline*.

3. *Power to convey assets* — Unless otherwise restricted by this *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, the Board of Directors shall have the power to invest, reinvest, buy, sell, lease, transfer, and convey any and all assets that it may hold in trust, subject always to the terms of the legacy, devise, or donation.

- a. Before the Board of Directors (or equivalent body) of a local church conveys property, it must seek the approval of the charge conference. Approval requires a simple majority vote. Additionally, the appointed pastor must be fully aware and consulted on the conveyance.

- b. In the case of a multi-point charge, the Board of Directors (or equivalent body) of the individual church conveying property must seek the approval of the individual charge conference. Approval requires a simple majority vote. Additionally, the appointed pastor must be fully aware and consulted on the conveyance.

- c. Before the Board of Directors (or equivalent body) of a district, annual conference, or regional conference conveys property, it must seek the approval of the district, annual or regional conference. Additionally, in the case of a district conveying property, the presiding elder must consent to the conveyance. In the event an annual conference conveying property, the bishop must consent to the conveyance. In the event of a regional conference conveying property, the regional college of bishops must consent to the conveyance by majority vote.

4. *Authority to execute board decisions* – Any contract, deed, lease, bill of sale, mortgage, or other necessary written instrument needed to implement any resolution authorizing proposed action regarding property or assets owned by the corporation may be executed by and on behalf of the Board of Directors by any two of its officers, who thereupon shall be duly authorized to carry out the direction of the corporation; and any written instrument so executed shall be binding and effective as to the action of the unit of the Global Methodist Church.

5. *Protection of assets* – The Board of Directors may intervene and take all necessary legal steps to safeguard and protect the interests and rights of the corporation anywhere and in all matters relating to property and rights to property whether arising by gift, devise, or otherwise, or where held in trust or established for the benefit of the individual unit of the Global Methodist Church or its membership.

6. *Gifts acceptance policy* – It shall be the duty of the pastor of a charge that receives any such gift, bequest, or devise to give prompt notice to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall take such steps as are necessary and proper to conserve, protect, and administer the gift; provided, however, that the Board of Directors may decline to receive or administer any such gift, devise, or bequest for any reason satisfactory to the Board.

7. *Insurance* – The Board of Directors shall annually compare the existence and adequacy of the insurance coverages for the unit of the Global Methodist Church that it governs. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the church, its properties, and its personnel are properly protected against risks.

8. *Disclosure of board actions* – The Board of Directors shall annually inform its corporation with a faithful report of its doings, of all funds, monies, securities, and property held in trust by it, and of its receipts and disbursements during the year. The beneficiary of a fund held in trust by the Board shall also be entitled to a report at least annually on the condition of such fund and on the transactions affecting it.

9. *Local church provision.* – The following provisions pertain to the Boards of Directors (or their equivalent bodies) of local churches in the Global Methodist Church:

a. *Local church usage* (§ 346.5a) – Subject to the direction of the charge conference, the Board of Directors (or its equivalent) shall have the supervision, oversight, and care of all real property owned by the local church and of all property and equipment acquired directly by the local church or by any society, board, class, commission, or similar organization connected to it, provided that the Board of Directors shall not permit the property to be used in a manner which is inconsistent with the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or violate the rights of any local church organization granted elsewhere in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Further, the Board of Directors shall not prevent or interfere with the pastor in the use of any of the local church's property for religious services or other proper meetings or purposes recognized by the law, usages, and customs of the Global Methodist Church, or permit the use of said property for religious or other meetings without the consent of the pastor or, in the pastor's absence, the consent of the presiding elder. Additionally, the Board of Directors and pastor of the local church shall ensure that the pews in the Global Methodist Church shall always be free.

b. *Usage by outside groups* (§ 346.5b) – Upon the consent of the pastor, the use of a local congregation's facilities or properties by an outside organization may be granted by the Board of Directors after consideration of whether the purposes and programs of that organization are consistent with the mission and values of the congregation and the Global Methodist Church.

c. *Parsonage.* (§ 346.5c) – Should the congregation possess a parsonage offered to the pastor for housing, the chair of the Board of Directors or his or her designee, accompanied by a member of the pastor parish relationship committee, shall make an annual review of the home to ensure that

it is properly maintained. Parsonages shall be mutually respected as the property of the congregation and the home of the pastoral family.

d. *Accessible buildings* (§ 346.5e) – The Board of Directors shall conduct an annual accessibility audit of their buildings, grounds, and facilities to discover and identify any physical, architectural, or communication barriers that exist that impede the full participation of people with disabilities and shall make plans and determine priorities for the elimination of all such barriers.

e. *Annual Report* (§ 346.6) – The Board of Directors shall annually make a written report to the charge conference, in which shall be included the following:

- i. The legal description and the reasonable valuation of each parcel of real estate owned by the church;
- ii. The specific name of the grantee in each deed of conveyance of real estate to the local church;
- iii. An inventory and the reasonable valuation of all personal property owned by the local church;
- iv. The amount of income received from any income-producing property and a detailed list of expenditures in connection therewith;
- v. The amount received during the year for building, rebuilding, remodeling, and improving real estate, and an itemized statement of expenditures;
- vi. Outstanding capital debts and how contracted;
- vii. A detailed statement of the insurance carried on each parcel of real estate, indicating whether restricted by co-insurance or other limiting conditions and whether adequate insurance is carried;
- viii. The name of the custodian of all legal papers of the local church, and where they are kept;
- ix. A detailed list of all trusts of which the local church is the beneficiary, specifying where and how the funds are invested
- x. An evaluation of all church properties, including the chancel areas, to ensure accessibility to persons with disabilities; and when applicable, a plan and timeline for the development of accessible church properties.

f. *Purchase, sale, lease, construction, and mortgage of property* – Notwithstanding the powers granted in § 912.3 above, prior to the purchase, sale, lease, or mortgage by a local church of any real estate, or the construction or renovation of a building, a resolution authorizing such action shall be passed by the charge conference, with the members thereof acting in their capacity as members of the corporate body, by a majority vote of those present and voting at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose, provided that not less than ten days' notice of such meeting and the proposed action shall have been given from the pulpit and in the weekly bulletin, newsletter, or electronic notice of the local church or other means if required or permitted by local law, and provided further, that written consent to such action shall be given by the pastor. The resolution authorizing such proposed action shall direct and authorize the Board of Directors to take all necessary steps to carry out the action and to cause to be executed, as hereinafter provided, any necessary contract, deed, bill of sale, mortgage, or other written instrument. The Board of Directors at any regular or special meeting shall take such action and adopt such resolutions as may be necessary or required by the local laws. Any required contract, deed, lease, bill of sale, mortgage, or other written instrument necessary to carry out the action so authorized shall be executed in the name of the corporation by any two of its officers, and any written instrument so executed shall be binding and effective as the action of the corporation.

g. *Restrictions on proceeds of mortgage or sale* - No real property on which a church building or parsonage is located shall be mortgaged or sold to provide for the current budget or operating

expense of a local church without the approval of sixty percent of the members and the full awareness of and consultation with the presiding elder.

h. *Local church permanent endowment committees* – Subject to the direction of the charge conference, the Board of Directors may establish a permanent endowment or local church foundation. The Board of Directors shall create a legal document guiding the direction of the permanent endowment and the charge conference shall designate or elect its leadership.

¶ **913. MERGER OF LOCAL GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCHES.** Two or more local churches, to more effectively fulfill their ministry, may merge and become a single church by pursuing the following procedure:

1. The merger must be proposed to the charge conference of each of the merging churches by a resolution stating the terms and conditions of the proposed merger.
2. The plan of the merger as proposed to the charge conference of each of the merging churches shall be approved by each of the charge conferences by at least a simple majority vote for the merger to be affected.
3. The pastor of each of the merging churches along with the presiding elder must give their consent to the merger.

JUDICIAL PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE RULES OF THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

1. APPLICABILITY OF JUDICIAL PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE RULES (JPP) – The *Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules* have been adopted by the General Conference of the Global Methodist Church and have the force of church law. The *Rules* together with Part Eight of the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* shall govern the processes outlined in Part Eight. In the event of a conflict between the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and the *Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules*, the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* shall govern.

Section I – Administrative Complaint Process. (See ¶¶ 803-807)

2. PROCEDURES GOVERNING ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS CONCERNING CLERGY. (See ¶ 806)

1. *Supervisory Response* – The first step in resolving an administrative complaint is a meeting of the complainant, the respondent, and the bishop or presiding elder. Both the complainant and the respondent are entitled to have with them a support person who shall have voice in the meeting. The participants in the meeting shall be informed a minimum of twenty days prior to the scheduled meeting, and the written complaint shall be presented to the complainant at least twenty days prior to any supervisory response. The purpose of the supervisory response is to, so far as possible, establish facts, consider circumstances and explanations, determine if there is an issue that merits action, and arrive at a plan of addressing the unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties (if any).

The supervisory response shall result in one of three possible outcomes:

a. The presiding elder or bishop dismisses the complaint, with the agreement of a majority of the presiding elders in the annual conference as having no basis in church law or fact. In such a case, the presiding elder or bishop shall provide a written rationale for dismissing the complaint, which shall be placed in the respondent's personnel file and copies of which shall be given to the complainant and respondent.

b. A resolution of the complaint is agreed to by all parties, signed, and placed in the respondent's personnel file.

c. A resolution of the complaint is not agreed to and the presiding elder or bishop determines that the allegations have a basis in fact that merits a response. In such case, the complaint shall be forwarded to the chairperson of the Board of Ministry for an examination and investigative process.

The supervisory response shall be completed within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the complaint by the bishop or presiding elder, with the possibility of one (and only one) 30-day extension if agreed upon by both the respondent and the complainant.

2. *Investigative Response*. A committee of at least five persons from the Board of Ministry shall convene to investigate the allegations of the complaint. The purpose of the investigative response is to, so far as possible, establish facts, consider circumstances and explanations, determine if there is an issue that merits action, and arrive at a plan of addressing the unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties (if any). The committee shall have access to all relevant materials related to the allegations and shall be able to interview witnesses. When witnesses are interviewed, the respondent and complainant, along with their support persons (with voice) shall be entitled to be present and also ask questions.

When the committee has finished its investigation, it shall hold a closed hearing, with the respondent and complainant and their support persons (with voice) entitled to be present. The

evidence regarding the allegations shall be presented. The respondent shall also have the opportunity to present evidence, ask questions of witnesses, and make statements to the committee. A verbatim record of the hearing shall be made and kept in the respondent's personnel file. At the conclusion of the hearing, the committee shall enter into executive session for the purpose of resolving the allegations. The committee's investigation shall be completed and the hearing held within 60 days of the referral of the complaint to the Board of Ministry, with the possibility of one (and only one) 30-day extension if agreed upon by both the respondent and the complainant. A written report of the committee's decision, including rationale, shall be placed in the respondent's personnel file and copies given to the respondent and complainant.

The investigative response shall result in one of three outcomes:

- a. The committee may find the allegations are without sufficient basis to take action and dismiss the complaint.
- b. The committee may find the allegations are substantiated and mandate a course of remedial actions, with appropriate benchmarks and follow-up subject to regular oversight by the Board of Ministry and annual review, including but not limited to:
 - 1) Program of continuing education;
 - 2) Sabbatical leave;
 - 3) Personal counseling or therapy;
 - 4) Program of career evaluation;
 - 5) Peer support and supervision;
- c. The committee may find the allegations are substantiated and recommend an involuntary status change, such as surrender of credentials, administrative location, involuntary leave of absence, or involuntary retirement.

Outcomes a or b shall be determined by majority vote of the committee and reported to the Board of Ministry. Outcome c shall require a three-quarters vote of the committee and the ratification by a majority of the Board of Ministry, as well as a majority of the clergy session.

3. *Administrative Review.* The administrative review committee shall review the report of the Investigative Response and the entire process used by the Board of Ministry in the Investigative Response to determine whether it followed the requirements of JPP 2.2, and fair process (§ 805). It shall have no authority to review the facts of the case or decide on its merits. The committee shall issue a report on the process and its compliance with the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*, which report shall be given to the respondent, the complainant, the bishop and cabinet, and to the Board of Ministry and clergy session prior to any action by those bodies on the investigative response. Prior to its report, if the committee determines that any error has occurred, it may recommend to the appropriate person or body that action be taken promptly to remedy the error or decide the error is harmless. Whether remedial action is taken shall factor into the response by the Board of Ministry and clergy session. The administrative review committee shall complete its report within thirty (30) days of receiving the matter.

4. *Appeal.* The respondent and complainant both have the right of appeal of the decision by the investigative response of the Board of Ministry. The appeal shall go first to the full Board of Ministry (with no members of the investigative committee voting as part of the full Board action) and then may be appealed to the clergy session. Both bodies shall have access to the full report of the investigative response, and additional evidence, testimony, and statements may be presented by both sides during the appeal. The decision of the Board of Ministry is final unless notice of appeal is filed with the bishop, with a copy to other parties to the administrative complaint within 30 days of the release of the decision. The decision of the clergy session is final, with no further appeal.

5. *Expenses.* All expenses for the administrative process for clergy shall be borne by the annual conference, except for travel and other expenses of the respondent and their support person.

3. PROCEDURES GOVERNING ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINTS CONCERNING BISHOPS. (See ¶ 807)

1. When the respondent is a bishop, the administrative process outlined in JPP 2 shall be adhered to, with the following changes. The supervisory process shall be administered by the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council or their designee. The chair shall inform the conference episcopacy committee where the bishop presides (if any) and all active bishops of the complaint and keep them apprised of its progress. Any investigative process shall be carried out by a committee of the Transitional Leadership Council. The investigative committee shall not include anyone from the annual conference presided over by the respondent bishop and shall be representative of the global makeup of the church. The Transitional Leadership Council shall administer any just resolution of an administrative complaint. Any involuntary status change of a bishop must be recommended by a three-fourths vote of the investigative committee and approved by the Transitional Leadership Council by a two-thirds vote (¶ 520.3, 703.2v). The administrative review committee of the annual conference presided over by the bishop shall examine the administrative process and issue its report prior to any action by the Transitional Leadership Council. The Transitional Leadership Council's decision shall be final.

2. *Expenses.* All expenses for the administrative process for complaints involving bishops shall be borne by the general church.

Section II – Judicial Supervisory Process

4. PROCEDURE FOR SUPERVISORY RESPONSE. (See ¶ 809)

1. The first step in resolving a judicial complaint is a required in-person meeting of the complainant, the respondent, and the bishop or presiding elder (at the bishop's discretion). Both the complainant and the respondent are entitled to have with them a support person who shall have voice in the meeting. The participants in the meeting shall be informed a minimum of twenty (20) days prior to the scheduled meeting, and the written complaint shall be presented to the complainant at least twenty (20) days prior to any supervisory response. The purpose of the supervisory response is to, so far as possible, establish facts, consider circumstances and explanations, determine if there is an issue that merits action, and arrive at a resolution of the complaint that restores compliance and redresses any harms resulting from a violation.

2. *If the respondent is a bishop*, the supervisory process shall be administered by the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council or their designee (¶ 810.1).

3. The supervisory response shall be completed within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the complaint by the person administering the complaint, with the possibility of only one 30-day extension if agreed upon by both the respondent and the complainant.

4. The supervisory response shall result in one of three possible outcomes:

a. The presiding elder or bishop dismisses the complaint, with the agreement of a majority of the presiding elders in the annual conference (or *if the respondent is a bishop*, the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council dismisses the complaint with the agreement of a majority of the Transitional Leadership Council) as having no basis in church law or fact. In such a case, the presiding elder, bishop, or Transitional Leadership Council chair shall provide a written rationale for dismissing the complaint, which shall be placed in the respondent's personnel file and copies of which shall be given to the complainant and respondent.

b. A resolution of the complaint is agreed to by all parties, signed, and placed in the respondent's personnel file. The resolution should specify which officer or body of the church will be responsible to ensure that the stipulations of the resolution are followed and maintained.

c. A resolution of the complaint is not agreed to and the presiding elder, bishop, or Transitional Leadership Council chair determines that the allegations have a basis in fact that merits a response. In such case, the complaint shall be forwarded to a counsel for the church to present the complaint to the committee on investigation for an examination and investigative process.

Section III – Judicial Investigative Response.

5. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION. (See ¶ 810)

1. *When respondent is a bishop*—The Transitional Leadership Council shall appoint a global committee on investigation. Bishops who are members of the TLC shall nominate persons to be elected. The Transitional Leadership Council shall nominate persons reflecting the racial, ethnic, geographic, and gender diversity of the church.

The committee shall consist of nine members, five ordained clergy who are not bishops and four professing members, and nine alternate members, five of whom shall be ordained clergy who are not bishops and four of whom shall be professing members. If possible, no two members and alternates shall be from the same annual conference. All geographical regions of the church shall be represented on the committee. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character. The committee on investigation shall elect a chairperson and secretary and organize following its appointment. Five clergy and four laity (or their alternates) seated as members of the committee shall constitute a quorum. Where technically feasible, members of the committee may participate in meetings and hearings through video conferencing.

2. *When the respondent is a clergy person* -- Each annual conference shall elect a committee on investigation to consider judicial complaints against clergy members of the annual conference in accordance with ¶ 613.5.

3. *When respondent is a layperson*— The presiding elder and the district lay leader (if any), shall appoint a committee on investigation consisting of four professing members and three clergy in full connection to serve only for this complaint. Both clergy and professing members must come from other congregations, exclusive of the churches of the respondent or the complainant. Committee members must be in good standing and must be of good character. The committee should reflect racial, ethnic, and gender diversity. Five members shall constitute a quorum.

6. REFERRAL OF A COMPLAINT TO A COUNSEL FOR THE CHURCH. (See ¶ 811)

1. *When the respondent is a bishop*

a. Within 30 days of the conclusion of the supervisory process, absent a just resolution or the dismissal of the complaint, the Transitional Leadership Council Chair shall name an elder within the same geographical region as the respondent to serve as counsel for the Church. The counsel for the Church shall draft and sign the complaint as a judicial complaint, forward it to the committee on investigation (¶ 811, JPP 5 and 7), and represent the Church in the judicial process, as provided in JPP 6.1 and 7.

b. The counsel for the Church, as appointed under ¶ 811.1a, shall prepare, sign, and forward the judicial complaint and all documentary evidence under consideration, including but not limited to information from the supervisory process, relevant information from the respondent's personnel file, and a suggested list of witnesses as deemed appropriate, to the chairperson of the committee on investigation, the complainant, and the respondent. The counsel for the Church shall be responsible for providing a progress report of the development of the judicial complaint every thirty (30) days to all parties, starting from the date of appointment until the complaint is finally resolved. The respondent shall be given an opportunity to submit to the committee on investigation a written response to the judicial complaint within thirty (30) days of receipt of the judicial complaint. The

chairperson shall convene the committee on investigation within sixty (60) days of receiving the judicial complaint.

2. *When the respondent is a clergy person*

a. Within 30 days of the conclusion of the supervisory process, absent a just resolution or the dismissal of the complaint, the bishop shall name an elder within the annual conference in which the alleged violation took place to serve as counsel for the Church. The counsel for the Church shall draft and sign the complaint as a judicial complaint, forward it to the committee on investigation (§ 810, JPP 5 and 7), and represent the Church in the judicial process, as provided in JPP 6.2 and 7.

b. The counsel for the Church, as appointed under § 810.2a, shall prepare, sign, and forward the judicial complaint and all documentary evidence under consideration, including but not limited to information from the supervisory process, relevant information from the respondent's personnel file, and a suggested list of witnesses as deemed appropriate, to the chairperson of the committee on investigation, the complainant, and the respondent. The counsel for the Church shall be responsible for providing a progress report of the development of the judicial complaint every thirty (30) days to all parties, starting from the date of appointment until the date the complaint is finally resolved. The respondent shall be given an opportunity to submit to the committee on investigation a written response to the judicial complaint within thirty (30) days of receipt of the judicial complaint. The chairperson shall convene the committee on investigation within sixty (60) days of receiving the judicial complaint.

3. *When the respondent is a layperson*

a. If a just resolution is not agreed to and the complaint is not dismissed, the presiding elder shall within thirty (30) days appoint a Global Methodist Church clergy or layperson to serve as counsel for the church. The counsel for the Church shall draft and sign the complaint as a judicial complaint, forward it to the committee on investigation (JPP 5 and 7), and represent the Church in the judicial process, as provided in JPP 6.3 and 7.

b. The counsel for the Church, as appointed under § 810.3a, shall prepare, sign, and forward the judicial complaint and all documentary evidence under consideration, including but not limited to information from the supervisory process and a suggested list of witnesses as deemed appropriate, to the chairperson of the committee on investigation, the complainant, and the respondent. The counsel for the Church shall be responsible for providing a progress report of the development of the judicial complaint every thirty (30) days to all parties, starting from the date of appointment until the date the complaint is finally resolved. The respondent shall be given an opportunity to submit to the committee on investigation a written response to the judicial complaint within thirty (30) days of receipt of the judicial complaint. The chairperson shall convene the committee on investigation within sixty (60) days of receiving the judicial complaint.

7. COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION—PROCEDURES. (See § 812)

1. *Parties and Counsel* – The parties are the respondent and the Church.

a. *Counsel for the Church* – Counsel for the Church shall be entitled to choose one assistant counsel without voice who may be an attorney. All reasonable expenses of the counsel and assistant counsel shall be paid by the annual conference (or general church, if the respondent is a bishop), but no honorarium or compensation shall be paid. When the Counsel for the Church needs to spend significant time away from ministry in order to fulfill their duties, the annual conference shall provide at its expense supplemental ministry assistance.

b. *Committee on Investigation* – The committee on investigation may have legal counsel present, who shall not be the conference chancellor, for the sole purpose of providing advice to the committee, at the annual conference's (or if the respondent is a bishop, general church's) expense.

c. A respondent who is a bishop or a clergyperson shall be entitled to select a clergyperson from the Global Methodist Church to serve as respondent's counsel. A respondent shall be entitled to choose one assistant counsel without voice who may be an attorney. In no instance and under no circumstances shall the respondent be entitled to receive an award of compensation for or reimbursement of any expenses or fees associated with the respondent's use of an attorney.

d. A lay respondent shall be entitled to select a lay member or clergyperson from the Global Methodist Church to serve as respondent's counsel. A respondent shall be entitled to choose one assistant counsel without voice who may be an attorney. In no instance and under no circumstances shall the respondent be entitled to receive an award of compensation for or reimbursement of any expenses or fees associated with the respondent's use of an attorney.

2. *Preliminary Meeting* – Basic procedural decisions shall be made in a preliminary meeting. During this meeting, the respondent and the respondent's counsel, the complainant, and the counsel for the Church shall have the right to argue procedural points before a decision is made by the chair. All procedural decisions and such unanticipated decisions as may come in the course of the meeting of the committee on investigation shall be rendered in writing so as to be available for consideration in all further possible stages of the case. The chair shall provide any rulings in writing to the parties at least five days prior to the initiation of the hearing before the committee on investigation.

3. *Hearing before the Committee on Investigation*

a. If possible, the respondent and the person(s) bringing the original complaint shall be brought face to face, but the inability to do this shall not invalidate an investigation. Notice of the hearings shall be given to all parties, including the complainant, and they all shall be permitted to be present during testimony, but not during deliberations. Proceedings in the investigation shall be informal. No oaths shall be taken. All procedural decisions shall be made by the chairperson.

b. *Interview of witness prior to or outside of hearing*—The chairperson shall have the power, whenever it is appropriate in the committee's own discretion, to appoint at least two members of the committee to interview any witness(es), provided that all parties may be present (without voice) and that three days notice of the time and place of such interview shall have been given to all parties. The members so appointed shall create a verbatim record of the interview and certify the record by signature for transmittal to the chairperson.

c. *Examination of witnesses*—The committee on investigation may call and question such persons or request such written information, including but not limited to materials from the supervisory process, as it deems necessary to establish whether or not there are reasonable grounds for formulating a charge or charges. The committee may receive from the counsels suggested lists of persons to be questioned, sources of written material, or questions to be asked. There shall be no right of cross-examination by either the respondent or the person(s) bringing the original complaint.

d. *Evidence*—The committee should only consider testimony or evidence which is relevant and reliable. The chairperson or presiding officer, after consultation with counsel for both parties, shall rule on challenges to relevance and reliability. The introduction of any material relating to events barred by the statute of limitations (§ 808.3) as evidence, as preface to evidence, or as build-up for evidence in the procedures of the committee on investigation or the trial proceedings shall be permitted when the presiding officer, after consultation with counsel for both parties, rules that such material is relevant and reliable.

e. *Verbatim transcript*—There shall be a verbatim record of all proceedings of the committee on investigation, except when the committee meets in executive session. The term *executive session* shall mean the committee meeting alone or with its legal counsel. If the complaint is dismissed or returned to the bishop, a verbatim record shall be sent to the conference secretary for retention.

4. *Bill of Charges and Specifications, Deliberations, Vote, and Referral* – A vote on each charge and each specification shall be taken separately. It is incumbent on each member of the committee to

base his or her vote solely on whether reasonable grounds exist to support the charges. If there are members who are unwilling to uphold the *Doctrines and Discipline* for reasons of conscience or otherwise, such members shall step aside in this matter and either alternate members or others who are willing to uphold the *Doctrines and Discipline* must be appointed to the committee to enable it to complete its responsibility.

a. *Bill of Charges and Specifications* – A charge is one of the chargeable offenses listed in ¶ 808.1-2. A charge shall not include more than one such chargeable offense. More than one charge against the same person may be presented and tried at the same time. Each charge must be written with specifications that support the charge. Each charge must be accompanied by one or more specifications of fact. Each specification, standing alone, must allege a factual occurrence that, if found to be true, would support a finding of guilt on the related charge. The specifications should be as specific as possible with information such as date, place, and specific events alleged to have occurred.

b. *Finding of reasonable grounds by committee and referral of bill of charges and specifications for trial*

1) *When respondent is a bishop* – A vote to adopt any charge or specification shall require six votes. Any bill of charges and specifications adopted shall be sent within five days to the bishop charged, to the secretary of the General Conference, to the chair and members of the Transitional Leadership Council, to counsel for the Church, and to the chairperson of the conference episcopacy committee (if any).

2) *When respondent is a clergyperson other than a bishop* – A vote to adopt any charge or specification shall require five votes. Any bill of charges and specifications adopted by the committee on investigation shall be sent by the chairperson within five days to the respondent, the complainant, the secretary of the annual conference, the chair of the Board of Ministry, the counsel for the Church, and the bishop.

3) *When respondent is a layperson* – A vote to adopt any charge or specification shall require five votes. Any bill of charges and specifications adopted by the committee shall be sent within five days to the respondent, the complainant, the recording secretary of the charge conference, counsel for the Church, the pastor(s), and the presiding elder.

c. *Findings other than reasonable grounds by committee or other actions*

1) If the committee on investigation determines that there are no reasonable grounds for charges, it may dismiss the judicial complaint. When deemed appropriate, it may also refer matters of concern to the proper referring Church official (to the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council in the case of a bishop, to the bishop in the case of a clergyperson, or to the pastor(s) in the case of a layperson) for administrative or other action. Notification of these actions should be given to the respondent, the complainant, counsel for the Church, and the proper referring Church officials, along with a written rationale for the committee's decision.

2) If the committee on investigation determines that the judicial complaint is not based upon chargeable offenses, or for other good cause, the committee may refer the complaint to the proper referring Church official (JPP 7.5c(1) above) for administrative or other action. Such referral will not constitute a dismissal or double jeopardy under ¶ 805.8. Notification of these actions should be given to the respondent, the complainant, counsel for the Church, and the proper referring Church officials.

3) Upon recommendation of the counsel for the Church and the counsel for the respondent, the committee may refer the matter back to the bishop (or if the respondent is a bishop, to the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council) as deemed appropriate for a process seeking a just resolution under the provisions of ¶ 804. The bishop or chair shall institute such a process and may use the assistance of a trained, impartial third party facilitator(s) or mediator(s). Such referral shall not constitute a dismissal or double jeopardy under ¶ 805.8. The appropriate persons, including the

counsel for the Church, the counsel for the respondent, and the complainant, shall enter into a written agreement outlining the process, including any agreements on confidentiality. Deadlines shall be suspended during a process seeking resolution.

If resolution is achieved, a written statement affirming such resolution, including any terms and conditions, shall be signed by the same persons who signed the written agreement outlining the process, and they shall agree on any matters to be disclosed to third parties. If the resolution results in a change of ministerial status, the disclosure agreement shall not prevent the disciplinary disclosures required for reporting such change or for readmission. The committee on investigation shall retain jurisdiction for the period of time stated for the implementation of the resolution agreement. The committee shall periodically monitor the progress of the completion of the terms and conditions of the resolution agreement, and shall certify when the terms and conditions of the agreement are completed. When the terms and conditions of the agreement are completed, the committee on investigation shall report its certification, and the status of the respondent as a result of completing the terms and conditions of the resolution agreement, to the resident bishop or Transitional Leadership Council chair.

If the process does not result in resolution, the matter shall be returned to the committee on investigation for further consideration.

Also, decision(s) of a trial court that call for certification as to the completion of terms and conditions of the trial court's decision(s) after the end of a trial are to be assigned to the committee on investigation for monitoring and certification of completion of the decision, unless the trial court specifies otherwise. If the respondent fails to complete the terms and conditions of a trial court decision, the committee shall notify the presiding officer of the trial, who may reconvene the trial court for its further consideration.

5. *Special Investigations*—In the event that jurisdiction in a judicial proceeding is ended as a result of the death of, or surrender of credentials by, the respondent in cases where the chargeable offense includes those listed in ¶ 808.1c, d, or e or ¶ 808.2c, d, or e, the committee on investigation may be convened at the request of the presiding bishop to make pastoral inquiry into the charges. The inquiry shall:

- a. not be judicial in nature;
- b. be empowered to receive witnesses and to consider evidence; and
- c. make a report of the inquiry to the body where the respondent's membership was held, including recommendations, if any.

6. *Records of the Committee on Investigation* – At the conclusion of the investigation process, all documents used by the committee on investigation, including transcriptions of its hearings, shall be sent to the secretary of the General Conference (when the respondent is a bishop) or of the annual conference (when the respondent is a clergyperson other than a bishop or is a layperson), who shall keep them in custody. Such documents are to be held in a confidential file and shall not be released except for the purposes of trial or appeal and then only to counsel for the Church, the respondent, and the presiding officer of the trial court. Those receiving the documents shall return them to the secretary of the General or annual conference following the conclusion of the trial and any appeal.

7. *When the respondent is a layperson*, the presiding elder shall preside at all meetings of the committee on investigation, shall be given a copy of the judicial complaint and any response, and shall have the right to be present and to speak at all meetings of the committee.

Section IV – Trials.

8. GENERAL ORGANIZATION AND PRE-TRIAL PROCEDURES. (See ¶ 813)

1. *Officers of the Court* – Officers shall consist of a presiding officer (JPP 11.2, 12.2, 13.2), who shall appoint a secretary and such other officers as deemed necessary. The presiding officer may have legal counsel, who shall not be the conference chancellor, at the expense of the annual conference holding the trial, for the sole purpose of advice to the presiding officer during the trial.

2. *Time and Place of Trial* – The official charged with convening the trial shall also fix the time and place for the trial and will notify the presiding officer, the respondent, counsel for the Church, and the complainant. In all cases, sufficient time shall be allowed for these persons to appear at the given place and time and for the respondent to prepare for the trial. The presiding officer shall decide what constitutes “sufficient time,” but in no case shall this time be less than twenty (20) days.

3. *Pre-Trial Motions and Referrals* – All appeals of any procedural or substantive matters that have occurred prior to referral of the charges to trial must be appealed to the presiding officer of the trial court before the convening of the trial. Otherwise, the right to appeal on such matters is forfeited. All objections to and motions regarding the regularity of the proceedings and the form and substance of charges and specifications must be made before the convening of the trial court. The presiding officer shall rule on all such preliminary objections and motions; in furtherance of truth and justice may permit amendments to the specifications or charges not changing the general nature of the same; and may dismiss all or any part of the bill of charges upon a finding by the presiding officer (1) that all or such part is without legal or factual basis or (2) that, even assuming the specifications to be true, they do not constitute a basis for a chargeable offense.

The presiding officer may refer the matter as deemed appropriate for a process seeking a just resolution under the provisions of ¶ 804 to the bishop (or if the respondent is a bishop, to the Transitional Leadership Council chair) with consent of the counsel for the Church and counsel for the respondent. The bishop or Transitional Leadership Council chair shall institute such a process and may use the assistance of a trained, impartial third party facilitator(s) or mediator(s). Such referral will not constitute a dismissal or double jeopardy under ¶ 805.8. If a process seeking a just resolution is used, the appropriate persons, including the counsel for the Church, counsel for the respondent, and complainant should enter into a written agreement outlining such process, including any agreement on confidentiality. If resolution is achieved, a written statement affirming such resolution, including any terms and conditions, shall be signed by the same persons who signed the written agreement outlining the process, and they shall agree on any matters to be disclosed to third parties. If the resolution results in a change of ministerial status, the disclosure agreement shall not prevent the disciplinary disclosures required for reporting such change or for readmission. The committee on investigation shall be charged with maintaining oversight of the fulfillment of the agreement (JPP 7.5c(3)). Such a written statement shall be given to the presiding officer, and the presiding officer shall take action consistent with the agreement. If no resolution results, the matter is returned to the presiding officer for the continuance of the trial process.

4. *Change of Venue* – The respondent may request a change of venue. This shall be a written request to the presiding officer of the court within ten (10) days of receipt of notice to appear for trial. The presiding officer shall rule upon the request after hearing arguments by the respondent and the Church. If the motion is approved, the presiding officer shall name the annual conference outside the episcopal area wherein the trial shall be held and shall notify the bishop of that conference, who shall convene the court. The cost of prosecution shall be borne by the conference where the case originated.

5. *Notice*

a. All notices required or provided for in relationship to investigations, trials, and appeals shall be in writing, signed by or on behalf of the person or body giving or required to give such notice, and shall be addressed to the person or body to whom it is required to be given. Such notices shall be served by delivering a copy thereof to the party or chief officer of the body to whom it is addressed in person or sent by other delivery system to the last known residence or address of such party. Proof of notice shall be provided and becomes a part of the record of the case.

b. In all cases wherein it is provided that notice shall be given to a bishop or presiding elder and the charges are against that particular person, then such notice (in addition to being given to the accused) shall be given, in the case of a bishop, to the chair of the Transitional Leadership Council and, in the case of a presiding elder, to the bishop in charge.

6. *Trial Scheduling and Continuances* – If in any case the respondent, after due notice (twenty days) has been given, shall refuse or neglect to appear at the time and place set forth for the hearing, the trial may proceed in the respondent's absence. However, if in the sole discretion of the presiding officer there is good and sufficient reason for the absence of the respondent or another essential person, the presiding officer may reschedule the trial to a later date.

7. *Counsel* – In all cases, a respondent shall be entitled to appear and to select and be represented by counsel: a clergy member of the Global Methodist Church if the respondent is a bishop or a clergy person; and a lay or clergy member of the Global Methodist Church if the respondent is a lay member. The respondent and the Church shall be entitled to have counsel heard in oral or written argument or both. The official charged with convening the court (see ¶¶ 814) shall, within thirty (30) days after receiving a copy of the charges and specifications, appoint counsel for the Church, if counsel has not been previously appointed, under the provisions of ¶¶ 805.10 and 811. In all cases of trial where counsel has not been chosen by the respondent, counsel shall be appointed by the presiding officer. The counsel for the Church and for the respondent each shall be entitled to choose one assistant counsel, who may be an attorney, without voice. "Without voice" means without the ability to speak to or within the hearing of the trial court. In no instance and under no circumstances shall the respondent be entitled to receive an award of compensation for or reimbursement of any expenses or fees associated with the respondent's use of an attorney.

8. *Witnesses* – Notice to appear shall be given to such witnesses as either party may name and shall be issued in the name of the Church and be signed by the presiding officer of the trial. It shall be the duty of all clergy and lay members of the Global Methodist Church to appear and testify when summoned. Refusal to appear or to answer questions ruled by the presiding officer to be relevant may be considered as disobedience to the order and discipline of the Global Methodist Church, except when refusal to answer is based on a good faith claim that answering might tend to incriminate the witness under state or federal criminal law or is based on a claim of confidential communication to a clergy person. A witness, to be qualified, need not be a member of the Global Methodist Church.

9. *Commissioned Out-of-Court Testimony*—The presiding officer of any court before which a case may be pending shall have power, whenever the necessity of the parties or witnesses shall require, to allow the examination of the witnesses outside of the trial hearing; provided that three days' notice of the time and place of taking such testimony shall have been given to the adverse party. The party making this request shall have the burden of showing good cause and shall bear the cost of such commissioned out-of-court testimony. The presiding officer or his/her designee shall preside over the testimony. Counsel for both parties shall be permitted to examine and cross-examine the witness or witnesses whose testimony is thus taken. The testimony shall be transcribed for inclusion in the trial record. The testimony may also be video recorded for replay during the trial. The testimony

shall be transmitted to the presiding officer and secretary of the court before which the case is pending.

10. *Amendments to Bill of Charges and Specifications* – After consultation with counsels, the presiding officer of the trial may make amendments to the bill of charges; provided that they do not change the nature of the charges and specifications and do not introduce new matter of which the respondent has not had due notice. When an amendment or amendments to a bill of charges is or are denied by the presiding officer, it or they shall not be introduced in the form of testimony in the trial. Charges or specifications previously considered and dropped by the committee on investigation shall not be introduced in the trial in the form of evidence or otherwise.

11. *Open or Closed Trials* – The selection of the trial court and the deliberations of the trial court shall be closed. All other sessions of the trial shall be open. The presiding officer may, in extenuating circumstances, in his or her judgment on motion of counsel for either party or on the presiding officer's own motion, declare a particular session of the court to be closed. Respecting the seriousness of the proceedings and the privacy of individuals involved, video recording or photography of the proceedings shall not be allowed. At all times, however, in the hearing portion of the trial, the presiding officer, the members of the trial court, the person(s) making the original complaint, counsel for the Church, the respondent, and counsel for the respondent shall have a right to be present.

12. *Combined Trials of Multiple Persons*—In cases in which a number of persons have allegedly engaged in the same offense at the same time and place, their trials may be combined into one trial for that same offense. The presiding officer shall make the determination on combination of trials.

9. TRIAL CONVENING AND SELECTION OF THE TRIAL COURT. (See ¶ 814)

1. *Convening of the Trial* – The convener shall notify the respondent in writing to appear at a fixed time and place no less than twenty (20) days after service of such notice and within a reasonable time thereafter for selection of the members of the trial court (JPP 8.3, ¶ 814).

2. *Trial Pool* – At the appointed time, in the presence of the respondent, counsel for the respondent, counsel for the Church, and the presiding officer, thirteen members and two alternate members shall be selected as a trial court out of a pool of thirty-five or more persons selected according to JPP 11.2, 12.2, and 13.2. Special consideration should be given so that the pool includes persons representative of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity.

3. *Selection of the Trial Court* – No person shall serve as a member of the trial court who was a member of the cabinet, Board of Ministry, or committee on investigation who considered the case in the process of coming to trial court. The counsel for the Church and the respondent shall each have up to four peremptory challenges and challenges for cause without limit. If by reason of challenges for cause being sustained the number is reduced to below thirteen, additional appropriate persons shall be nominated in like manner as was the original panel to take the places of the numbers challenged, who likewise shall be subject to challenge for cause. This method of procedure shall be followed until a trial court of thirteen members and two alternate members has been selected.

4. *Alternates* – The two alternate members shall sit as observers of the trial. They shall replace members of the trial court who are not able to continue to serve, so that the trial court shall always consist of thirteen members, unless the respondent and counsel for the Church agree to a lesser number.

5. *Trial Court Questions* – The members of the trial court, including the alternate members, may, subject to the approval of the presiding officer of the court, ask questions on matters on which evidence has been presented.

10. TRIAL GUIDELINES AND RULES.

1. *Authority of Presiding Officer* – After the trial is convened the authority of the presiding officer shall include the right to set reasonable time limits, after consultation with counsel for the Church and counsel for the respondent, for the presentation of the case, provided such time is equal for both. The authority of the presiding officer shall be limited to ruling upon proper representation of the Church and the person charged, admissibility of evidence, recessing, adjourning, and reconvening sessions of the trial, charging the members of the trial court as to the Church law involved in the case at the beginning of the trial and just before they retire to make up their verdict, and such other authority as is normally vested in a civil court judge sitting with a jury, but he or she shall not have authority to pronounce any judgment in favor of or against the person charged other than such verdict as may be returned by the trial court, which body shall have the exclusive right to determine the innocence or guilt of the person charged.

2. *Entering of the Plea* – After selection of the trial court, the respondent shall be called upon by the presiding officer to plead to the charge, and the pleas shall be recorded. If the respondent pleads “guilty” to the charges preferred, no trial shall be necessary, but evidence may be taken with respect to the appropriate penalty, which shall thereupon be imposed. If the respondent pleads “not guilty” or if the respondent should neglect or refuse to plead, the plea of “not guilty” shall be entered, and the trial shall proceed. The respondent shall at all times during the trial, except as hereinafter provided, have the right to produce testimony and that of witnesses and to make defense.

3. *Order of Trial* – Following the entry of the plea, each counsel may make an opening statement to inform the trial court of what the evidence is expected to be. Evidence shall then be offered by questioning of witnesses and by documents and other evidence shown to be relevant and reliable. Each counsel shall have opportunity to make closing arguments before the trial court begins deliberations. Deliberations of the trial court and receiving of the verdict shall follow.

4. *Oaths* – The administration of oaths shall not be required. At the beginning of the trial, the presiding officer shall remind all parties of the duties and responsibilities of Church membership and/or the clergy covenant. Failure to testify truthfully subjects witnesses to potential charges of disobedience to the order and discipline of the Global Methodist Church.

5. *Recess and Trial Procedures* – The court may recess from time to time as convenience or necessity may require. During the time of recess, the members of the trial court shall be instructed that under no circumstance will they speak to one another or to others about the trial or observe media reports regarding the case. When, in consultation with counsel for both parties, the presiding officer finds it advisable, the members and reserves shall be sequestered. Threatening or tampering with the trial court or officers of the trial court shall be considered disobedience to the order and discipline of the Global Methodist Church. The presiding officer shall remain and preside until the decision is rendered and the findings are completed and shall thereupon sign and certify them.

6. *Objections and Rulings* – Objections of any party to the proceedings shall be entered on the record. All rulings on pre-trial appeals, objections, and motions shall be entered on the record. All objections and motions from counsels during the proceedings of the trial shall be made in open session before the trial court and entered on the record along with the rulings of the presiding officer on all such objections and motions.

7. *Exclusion of Witnesses*—With the exception of the complainant and respondent, no witness to be examined shall be present during the examination of another witness if the opposing party objects. Witnesses shall be examined first by the party producing them, then cross-examined by the opposite party and may be questioned by members of the trial court, with the approval of the presiding officer. After counsels have completed direct and cross examination, the Counsel for the Church may conduct re-direct examination of a witness, provided, however, that the questions posed by the Counsel for the Church pertain to testimony already offered by the witness. At the

completion of re-direct examination, the counsel for the respondent may conduct a re-cross examination, provided, however, that the questions posed by the respondent's counsel pertain only to testimony already offered by the witness during direct or re-direct examination. The presiding officer of the court shall determine all questions of relevancy and competency of evidence.

8. *Recording of Proceedings* – A verbatim record of all proceedings of the trial shall be by stenograph or other appropriate means and reduced to writing and certified by the presiding officer or secretary. The official record, including all exhibits, papers and evidence in the case, shall be the basis of any appeal that may be taken.

9. *Evidence* – The introduction of any material relating to events happening before the six-year statute of limitation period (§ 808.3) as evidence, as preface to evidence, or as build-up for evidence in the procedures of the trial proceedings may be permitted when the presiding officer, after consultation with counsel for both parties, rules that such material is relevant and reliable. Documentary evidence deemed by the presiding officer to be relevant and reliable may be in the physical possession of the trial court during deliberations at their request.

10. *Instructions and Charges* – The presiding officer shall not deliver a charge reviewing or explaining the evidence or setting forth the merits of the case. The presiding officer shall express no opinion on the law or the facts while the court is deliberating. If requested by either party's counsel, the presiding officer shall instruct the trial court on Church law applicable to the case. Instructions may be given at the beginning of the trial, during the trial, before the trial court begins deliberations or a combination of any of these. If requested by the trial court, instructions may be given during deliberations. The presiding officer shall not review or explain the evidence or comment on the merits of the case.

11. TRIAL OF A BISHOP.

1. The Transitional Leadership Council chair shall designate an active or former bishop to serve as presiding officer.

2. The trial shall be convened as provided in JPP 9 with the pool of thirty-five or more persons to consist of ordained clergy named by the Transitional Leadership Council in approximately equal numbers from each episcopal area within the geographical area where the bishop presides (with a minimum of three annual conferences represented), excluding the annual conference(s) over which the respondent bishop presides. Special consideration should be given so that the pool includes persons representative of racial, age, ethnic, and gender diversity. Persons excluded by virtue of JPP 9.3, shall not be included in the trial court pool.

3. The secretary of the court shall at the conclusion of the proceedings send all trial documents to the secretary of the General Conference, who shall keep them in custody. If an appeal is taken, the secretary shall forward the materials forthwith to the secretary of the committee on appeals. After the appeal has been heard, the records shall be returned to the secretary of the General Conference unless a further appeal on a question of law has been made to the Connectional Committee on Appeals, in which case the relevant documents shall be forwarded to the secretary of that body.

12. TRIAL OF A CLERGY MEMBER.

1. The bishop shall designate another active or former bishop to be presiding officer.

2. The trial for a clergy member shall be convened as provided in JPP 9, with the pool of thirty-five or more persons to consist of ordained clergy from the respondent's annual conference. If there are not enough persons in appropriate categories in an annual conference to complete the pool, additional persons may be appointed from other annual conferences. All appointments to the pool shall be made by the presiding elders). Special consideration should be given so that the pool

includes persons representative of racial, age, ethnic, and gender diversity. Persons excluded by virtue of JPP 9.3, shall not be included in the trial court pool.

3. The secretary of the court shall at the conclusion of the proceedings send all trial documents to the secretary of the annual conference, who shall keep them in custody. Such documents are to be held in a confidential file and shall not be released for other than appeal or new trial purposes without a signed release from both the clergyperson charged and the presiding officer of the trial that tried the case. If an appeal is taken, the secretary shall forward the materials forthwith to the president of the committee on appeals. After the appeal has been heard, the records shall be returned to the secretary of the annual conference unless a further appeal on a question of law has been made to the Connectional Committee on Appeals, in which case the relevant documents shall be forwarded to the secretary of that body.

13. TRIAL OF A LAY MEMBER OF A LOCAL CHURCH.

1. The presiding elder may be the presiding officer or may designate another ordained clergyperson (who does not have any kind of relationship with the respondent or complainant) to preside.

2. The trial shall be convened as provided in JPP 9, with the pool of thirty-five or more persons to consist of professing members of local churches other than the local church of the charged layperson within the same district. Appointments to the pool shall be made by the presiding elder, who may consult with the district lay leader and with local church pastors. Special consideration should be given so that the pool includes persons representative of racial, age, ethnic, and gender diversity. Persons excluded by virtue of JPP 9.3, shall not be included in the trial court pool.

3. The person charged may request a change of venue. This shall be a written request to the officers of the court within ten (10) days of receipt of notice to appear for trial. The presiding officer shall rule upon the request after hearing argument for the defense and the Church. If the motion is approved, the presiding officer shall name another district wherein the trial shall be held and shall notify the presiding elder, who shall convene the court. The thirty-five-member pool shall consist of professing members from that district. The cost of prosecution shall be borne by the annual conference.

4. If the trial court finds that the charges are proven by clear and convincing evidence, then it may impose such penalties as it may determine, including that the professing membership of the charged layperson in the Global Methodist Church be terminated, provided that the trial court shall first consider other remedies that would fulfill the provisions of ¶¶ 303, 315-317, and 319.

5. The appropriate officer of the trial shall, at the conclusion of the proceeding, deposit all trial documents with the secretary of the annual conference. Such documents are to be held in a confidential file and shall not be released for other than appeal or new trial purposes without a signed release from both the layperson charged and the presiding officer of the trial that tried the case. If an appeal is taken, the secretary shall deliver all documents to the presiding elder (. After the appeal has been heard, the records shall be returned to the custody of the secretary of the annual conference. The existence (though not the contents) of such a file shall be disclosed at the request of a pastor when a layperson removed from membership desires to join another congregation of the Global Methodist Church.

Section V – Appeals. (See ¶ 816)

14. APPEAL OF A BISHOP OR CLERGY MEMBER.

1. In case of conviction by a trial court, a bishop or clergy member, including clergy on honorable or administrative location, shall have the right of appeal to the Connectional Council on Appeals, provided proper notice is given under ¶ 816.1.

2. When notice of an appeal has been given to the presiding officer of the court, the presiding officer shall give notice of the same to the chair and secretary of the Connectional Council on Appeals and submit the documents in the case. In case the documents have been sent to the secretary of the annual or General Conference, the presiding officer shall instruct the secretary to send the documents to the president and secretary of the Connectional Council on Appeals. The Council shall give notice within thirty (30) days to the presiding bishop of the conference from which the appeal is taken (or to the Transitional Leadership Council chair when the appellant is a bishop), to the appellant, and to counsel for the opposing party of the time and place where the appeal will be heard. Such hearing shall occur within sixty (60) days following receipt of notice to the committee on appeals. The counsels who prosecuted the trial shall continue in the appeals process, unless replaced in accordance with the provisions of ¶¶ 805.10 and 811.

3. All necessary traveling, sustenance, or other reasonable related expense incurred by the Connectional Council on Appeals, including any cost for legal counsel retained to advise the Council, in the hearing of an appeal case coming from an annual conference and appearing before the Council, shall be paid out of the administrative fund of the annual conference (if respondent is clergy) or general church (if respondent is a bishop) in which the proceedings arise. The president of the Connectional Council on Appeals shall approve all expenses. Expenses for counsel for the Church shall be paid by the annual conference or general church where the case originated. Such expenses for counsel for the respondent shall be paid by the respondent, unless in the interest of fairness, the committee on appeals orders the annual conference or general church to reimburse the respondent.

15. APPEAL OF A LAY MEMBER.

1. A lay member convicted by a trial court shall have the right of appeal and shall serve written notice of appeal with the pastor and the presiding elder within thirty (30) days of conviction.

2. The presiding elder shall give written notice to all concerned of the time and place of the convening of an ad hoc appeals committee. Notice of the convening shall be given not less than ten (10) nor more than thirty (30) days after the presiding elder has received notice of appeal. The committee on appeals shall convene not less than thirty (30) days nor more than ninety (90) days after notice of appeal is received.

3. The ad hoc conference appeals committee shall be constituted in the following manner: The Leadership Committee (¶ 613.4) shall appoint eleven professing members of churches within the annual conference not in the appellant's district (or the district where the trial was held), who hold office either as local church lay leader or lay member of the annual conference, none of whom shall have been members of the trial court. Nine members shall serve as the appeals committee and two shall serve as alternates.

4. The findings of the conference appeals committee shall be certified by the presiding elder to the pastor of the church of which the accused is a member.

5. Questions of church law arising from the appeal process may be appealed by either party to the Connectional Council on Appeals.

6. All necessary traveling, sustenance, or other reasonable related expenses incurred by the committee on appeals, including any cost for legal counsel retained to advise the committee, in the

hearing of an appeal case coming from a lay member and appearing before any committee on appeals, shall be paid out of the administrative fund of the annual conference. The presiding elder shall approve all expenses. Expenses for counsel for the Church shall be paid by the annual conference. Such expenses for counsel for the respondent shall be paid by the respondent, unless in the interest of fairness, the appeals committee orders the annual conference to reimburse the respondent.

Section VI – Summary.

16. TIMELINES AND DEADLINES.

This paragraph summarizes the timelines and deadlines contained in ¶¶ 801-819 and the JPP.

1. All notices shall be delivered to the applicable parties not less than 20 days before a hearing (¶¶ 805.2, JPP 2.1, 4.1, 8.2, 8.6, 9.1).
2. Evidence to be used in a hearing shall be available to the respondent not less than ten days prior to the hearing (¶ 805.4).
3. The supervisory response shall be completed within 60 days (with the possibility of a 30-day extension) (JPP 2.1c and 4.3).
4. The investigative response shall be completed within 60 days (with the possibility of a 30-day extension) (JPP 2.2).
5. The relevant supervising officer shall appoint a counsel for the church within 30 days of the end of a supervisory response regarding a judicial complaint (JPP 6.1a, 6.2a, 6.3a).
6. The counsel for the church shall report on the status of the complaint every 30 days to all parties (JPP 6.1b, 6.2b, 6.3b).
7. A response to a judicial complaint must be made in writing within 30 days of the respondent receiving the complaint (JPP 6.1b, 6.2b, 6.3b).
8. The committee on investigation must be convened within 60 days of the receipt of a judicial complaint (JPP 6.1b, 6.2b, 6.3b).
9. Preliminary rulings by the chair of the committee on investigation shall be released to all parties at least 5 days prior to the committee on investigation hearing (JPP 7.2).
10. If witnesses are to be interviewed outside of the hearing, notice shall be given to all parties at least three days before (JPP 7.3b and 8.9).
11. The bill of charges and specifications shall be sent to all parties by the committee on investigation within five days of its decision (JPP 7.1b).
12. Any request for a change of venue shall be submitted with 10 days of receiving the notice of the time and place of a trial (JPP 8.4 and 13.3).
13. The convening officer of the trial court shall appoint a counsel for the church within 30 days of receiving the bill of charges and specifications, if one has not been appointed (JPP 8.7).
14. Notice of an appeal must be filed within 30 days of the release of a decision (¶¶ 816.1, 818.2, JPP 2.4).
15. Notice of a committee on appeals hearing time and place shall be given within 30 days of receiving the appeal (JPP 14.2 and 15.2).
16. The committee on appeals hearing shall be held within 60 days of receiving the appeal (JPP 14.2).
17. An ad hoc (local) committee on appeals shall convene within 30 to 90 days of receiving the appeal (JPP 15.2).

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ID	TITLE	¶	COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
020	Introduction	C - 201	Constitution	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Constitutional Legislative Committee is overseeing the writing of a constitution per the Plan of Organization.				
021	Section One — Foundational Principles	C - 202	Constitution	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Constitutional Legislative Committee is overseeing the writing of a constitution per the Plan of Organization.				
022	Section Two — Organization	C - 203	Constitution	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Constitutional Legislative Committee is overseeing the writing of a constitution per the Plan of Organization.				
023	Section Three — The Restrictive Rule and Amendments	C - 204	Constitution	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Constitutional Legislative Committee is overseeing the writing of a constitution per the Plan of Organization.				
024	Global Methodist Book of Worship	705.2	Connectional Organization	Rev. David Daniel Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 705.2 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
025	Amend ¶501 — Nature of Superintendency	501	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 501 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
026	¶502 — Role & Qualifications of Bishops	502	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 502 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
027	¶503 — General Responsibilities of Bishops	503	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 503 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
028	¶504 — (DELETE) Specific Responsibilities	504	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 504 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
029	¶504 — (NEW) Election of Bishops	504	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 504 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
030	¶505 — (DELETE) Compensation and Salary Unit	505	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 505 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
031	¶505 — (NEW) The General Committee on Episcopacy	505	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 505 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
032	¶506 — (NEW) The Assembly of Bishops	506	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 506 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
033	¶507 — (NEW) Conference Superintendents	507	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 507 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
034	¶508 — (NEW) Selection & Assignment of Presiding Elders	508	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 508 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
035	¶509 — Responsibilities of Presiding Elders	509	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 509 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				

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ID	TITLE		COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
036	¶508 — (DELETE) The Annual Conference Cabinet	508	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 508 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
037	¶509 — (DELETE) Considerations for Appointment	509	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 509 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
038	¶510 — (DELETE) Consultation and Appointment-Making	510	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 510 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
039	¶511 — (DELETE) Criteria for Appointments	511	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 511 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
040	¶512 — (DELETE) Clergy Effectiveness and Appointments	512	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 512 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
041	¶513 — (DELETE) Frequency of Appointments	513	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 513 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
042	¶514 — (DELETE) Appointment of Clergy to Ministries Outside the Local Church	514	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 514 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
043	¶510 — (NEW) Consideration and Criteria for Appointments	510	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 510 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
044	¶515 — (DELETE) Provisions for Episcopal Areas	515	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 515 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
045	Creation of Working Group for GMC Book of Worship	Resolution	Connectional Organization	Commission on Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry	Accepted
RATIONALE: As this petition is very similar to Petition 024, the References Committee has moved Petition 045 from the Ministry & Local Church Committee (where it was originally sent by the Petitions Committee) to the Connectional Organization Committee.					
046	¶321 — The Meaning of Holy Communion	321	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Joe Stallings Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 321 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					
047	Petition to Adopt a Methodist Mission Statement	301	Constitution	Dr. David F. Watson Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 301 is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
048	Becoming Disciples of Christ	319	Ministry & Local Church	Mr. Tom Hassler Individual (Laity)	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 319 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					
049	Approved Catechism	305	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Tera Ertz Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 305 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					

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ID	TITLE		COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
050	Sexuality	202.7	Constitution	Mr. Walter Warriner Individual (Laity)	Not Accepted
	RATIONALE: Unable to verify ten co-signers who are members of the Global Methodist Church				
051	Abortion	202.3	Constitution	Mr. Walter Warriner Individual (Laity)	Not Accepted
	RATIONALE: Unable to verify ten co-signers who are members of the Global Methodist Church				
052	Powers of General Conference	604	Conferences	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 604 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
053	Insurance Requirements for Inactive Elders	410	Ministry & Local Church	Florida Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 410 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
054	Insurance Requirements for Inactive Deacons	409	Ministry & Local Church	Florida Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 409 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
055	Relations with Other Wesleyan Denominations	523.5	Conferences	Rev. Clark Atkins Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 523 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
056	Replacing Bishop with Conference Superintendent	612	Conferences	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 612 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
057	Relocating Commissions to Proper Paragraph	522	Conferences	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 522 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
058	Future Establishment of Regional Conferences	609	Conferences	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 609 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
059	Retaining Investment in Diverse Appointment Making While Clarifying Oversight	509	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 509 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
060	Making Timeless and Adding Function of Conference Superintendent	511	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 511 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
061	Constraining Unnecessary Presiding Elder Functions through Embrace of Conference Superintendent Role	803	Judicial Administration	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: All of Part 8 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
062	Removing the Role of the Presiding Elder in Course Selection	407	Ministry & Local Church	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 407 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
063	Pastors Appointed / Laity Assigned	355	Ministry & Local Church	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 355 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				

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ID	TITLE	¶	COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
064	Pastors Appointed / Laity Assigned	409	Ministry & Local Church	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 409 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
065	Accountability for Commissions and Alignment of Commission Locations	705	Connectional Organization	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 705 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
066	Distinction Between CLM (Certified Lay Minister) and Lay Person	507	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition deals with items within the scope of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization even as 507 is not specifically mentioned in The Plan.					
067	Definition of Qualified and Trained and Distinction Between CLM and Lay Person	507	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition deals with items within the scope of the Episcopacy and Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization even as 507 is not specifically mentioned in The Plan.					
068	Resurrection Creed	Resolution	NONE	Dr. David Inskeep Individual (Clergy)	Not Accepted
RATIONALE: Unable to verify ten co-signers who are members of the Global Methodist Church					
069	Restores Responsibilities of Annual Conference Finance and Administration Committee	612.3	Conferences	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 612 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
070	Remove Transitional Provisions	613	Conferences	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 612 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
071	Removes Transitional Provisions and Establishes Roles of Petitions Secretary & Connectional Council	607	Conferences	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 607 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
072	Removes Transitional Provisions for Officers of the General Conference	605	Connectional Organization	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 605 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
073	Member Involvement and Accountability and the Inactive Roll	322	Ministry & Local Church	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 322 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
074	Entrance into Ordained Ministry Traditional and Alternative Pathways	406	Ministry & Local Church	Trinity Conference Delegation	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 406 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					
075	Local Church Connectional Funding and Benefits	349	Ministry & Local Church	Trinity Conference Delegation	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 349 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					
076	¶511 — (NEW) Transferring Bishops	511	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 511 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
077	¶512 — (NEW) Vacancy in the Office of Bishop	512	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 512 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.					

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ID	TITLE		COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
078	¶513 — (NEW) Status of Bishops Emeriti	513	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 513 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
079	¶514 — (NEW) Leaves	514	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 514 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
080	¶515 — (NEW) Complaints Against Bishops	515	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: While Paragraph 515 is listed in the Plan of Organization as being in the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee, this petition falls under the purview of the Judicial Administration Committee as it “[relates] to complaints against clergy and bishops...” per the Plan of Organization.				
081	¶516 — (DELETE) Interim Bishops	516	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 516 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
082	¶517 — (DELETE) Vacancy in the Office of Bishop	517	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 517 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
083	¶518 — (DELETE) Status of Senior Bishops	518	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 518 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
084	Finance, Administration, Pension, and Benefits	705.5	Connectional Organization	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 705 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
085	¶519 — (DELETE) Leaves	519	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 519 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
086	Nominations & Leadership Committee	612.4	Conferences	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 612 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
087	¶520 — (DELETE) Complaints Against Bishops	520	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 520 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
088	Responsibilities of Presiding Elders	507 509	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: While Paragraph 507 is not specified as within the limited agenda per The Plan, Paragraph 509 is specified, and the subject of this petition does fall within the stated purpose of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
089	¶322.3 Refinements	322.3	Ministry & Local Church	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 322 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
090	¶521 — (DELETE) Council of Bishops	521	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 521 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
091	¶522 — (DELETE) Christian Unity	522	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 522 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
092	¶523 — (DELETE) Other Wesleyan Denominations	523	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted

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ID	TITLE		COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 523 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
093	¶703 — (NEW) Connectional Operations Officer	703	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 703 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
094	¶704 — (NEW) Connectional Commissions	704	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 704 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
095	¶705 — (NEW) Membership of Connectional Commissions	705	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 705 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
096	¶706 — (NEW) Leadership of Connectional Commissions	706	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 706 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
097	¶707 — (NEW) Operations	707	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 707 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
098	¶708 — (NEW) Areas of Responsibility and Mission	708	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 708 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
099	¶709 — (NEW) Connectional Commission on Evangelism, Church Multiplication, Missional Mobilization, and Disaster Response	709	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 709 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
100	¶710 — (NEW) Connectional Council on Discipleship, Doctrine, and Just Ministry	710	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 710 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
101	¶711 — (NEW) Connectional Commission on Ministry and Higher Education	711	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 711 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
102	¶712 — (NEW) Connectional Commission on Communications	712	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 712 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
103	¶714 — (NEW) Connectional Commission on the General Conference	714	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 714 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
104	¶715 — (NEW) Connectional Commission on Ecumenical Relationships	715	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 715 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
105	¶716 — (NEW) Connectional Commission on Conferences	716	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted

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ID	TITLE		COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 716 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
106	Petition on Sacramental Authority	313	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Tera Ertz Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 313 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
107	Certified Lay Servants	402	Ministry & Local Church	Mr. Neil Cleveland Individual (Laity)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 402 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
108	Amend Article VI of Constitution	C - 203 Article VI	Constitution	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The constitution is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
109	Presiding Elder Name Change to Shepherding Elder	506 507	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Rev. Alan Richardson Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraphs 506 & 507, while not specified in the Plan of Organization, cover subject matter within the purview of the Episcopacy & Superintendency and thus are within the limited agenda.				
110	Resolution Adopting Book of Doctrines and Discipline & Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules	Resolution	PLENARY	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The TBDD and JPP are within the limited agenda as stated in the proposed agenda per the Plan of Organization.				
111	The Power and Gifts of the Holy Spirit	103	Constitution	Aldersgate Renewal Ministries	Not Accepted
	RATIONALE: Petitioning organization does not have standing to submit petitions to the General Conference.				
112	Approving Covenant with the Iglesia Evangelica Metodista de Costa Rica	Resolution	PLENARY	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This resolution will be considered by the plenary as part of the agenda for day one. As such, the References Committee has moved this petition from the Connectional Organization Committee directly to the plenary session.				
113	Election of Scott Jameson Jones and Mark James Webb as Bishops of the GMC	Resolution	PLENARY	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: While this resolution was initially sent to the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee, the References Committee has determined that it will be sent directly to the plenary session.				
114	Election of Additional Bishops at the Convening General Conference	Resolution	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This resolution is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee as this item falls within their stated purview (“...[T]he process for the election and assignment of bishops...”) within the Plan of Organization.				
115	Theological Statement Working Group Resolution	Resolution	Constitution	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This resolution is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as this item falls within their stated purview (...[O]versee the writing of a constitution...) within the Plan of Organization.				
116	Addition of a New Article XII to the Constitution: Local Church Bill of Rights	C - 204 Article XII	Constitution	North Carolina Conference Directors	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
117	Editorial Amendment — JPP 3	JPP 03	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				

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ID	TITLE	¶	COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
118	Editorial Amendment — JPP 4	JPP 04	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
119	Amend ¶612 to Require Connectional Council or Equivalent Body	612.1	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 612 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
120	Editorial Amendment — JPP 5	JPP 05	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
121	Editorial Amendment — JPP 6	JPP 06	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
122	GMC Vision — Mission — Goals — Objectives — Resources	301	Constitution	Rev. Karen Upson Individual (Clergy)	Not Accepted
RATIONALE: Unable to verify ten co-signers who are members of the Global Methodist Church					
123	Editorial Amendment — JPP 7	JPP 07	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
124	¶702 — (NEW) Connectional Council	702	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 702 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
125	¶713 — (NEW) Connectional Commission on Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits	713	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 702 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
126	Editorial Amendment — JPP 8	JPP 08	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
127	Editorial Amendment — JPP 11	JPP 11	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
128	Editorial Amendment — JPP 14	JPP 14	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
129	Amendment to ¶203 of the Constitution	C - 203 Article VI	Constitution	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
130	¶407 — Amendments to Educational Requirements	407	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 407 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
131	Amend ¶409	409	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 409 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.					

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ID	TITLE	¶	COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
132	Amend ¶410	410	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 410 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
133	Task Force to Revise the General Rules	Resolution	Constitution	Dr. David F. Watson Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: As the General Rules are part of the Constitution of the GMC, this petition falls within the limited agenda under the Constitution Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
134	Amend ¶419	419	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 419 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
135	Amend ¶414	414	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 414 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
136	¶416 — (NEW) Missionaries	416	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition creates a role as lay and clergy missionary in the church and provides criteria and the process for setting individuals part for such a role, which falls within the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
137	Definition of Qualified and Trained and Distinction Between CLM and Lay Person	309.3	Ministry & Local Church	Trinity Conference Delegation	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 309 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
138	Clarification that CLM's are Assigned	402.1	Ministry & Local Church	Trinity Conference Delegation	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 402 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
139	Editorial Petition to Delete ¶109	109	Constitution	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: While Paragraph 109 is not part of the limited agenda, the petition deals with the restrictive rules, which are proposed to be part of the Constitution. It therefore falls within the purview of the Constitution committee per the Plan of Organization.				
140	Editorial Amendment to ¶349	349	Financial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 349 is within the bounds of the Financial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
141	Constraining Unnecessary Presiding Elder Functions	415	Ministry & Local Church	Trinity Conference Delegation	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 415 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
142	Editorial Amendment to ¶350	350	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Ministry & Local Church Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 3 per the Plan of Organization.				
143	Editorial Amendment to ¶354	354	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Ministry & Local Church Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 3 per the Plan of Organization.				
144	Editorial Amendment to ¶355	355	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Ministry & Local Church Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 3 per the Plan of Organization.				

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ID	TITLE	¶	COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
145	Editorial Amendment to ¶403	403	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: The Ministry & Local Church Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 4 per the Plan of Organization.					
146	Editorial Amendment to ¶407	407	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: The Ministry & Local Church Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 4 per the Plan of Organization.					
147	Editorial Amendment to ¶411	411	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: The Ministry & Local Church Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 4 per the Plan of Organization.					
148	Editorial Amendment to ¶504	504	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: The Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 5 per the Plan of Organization.					
149	Lay Delegates Shall be Members of the Global Methodist Church	C - 203 Article VI.4	Constitution	Trinity Conference Delegation	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
150	¶406 — Entrance into Ordained Ministry	406	Ministry & Local Church	Dr. Burt Palmer Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 406 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					
151	¶419 — Transitional Provisions	419	Ministry & Local Church	Dr. Burt Palmer Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 419 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
152	¶412 — Supply Pastors	412	Ministry & Local Church	Dr. Burt Palmer Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 412 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					
153	¶202.7 — Human Sexuality and Marriage	202.7	Constitution	Springfield Oaks GMC Springfield, Georgia (USA)	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 202 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					
154	Completion of Educational Requirements Prior to Ordination	407	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Commission on Ministry	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 407 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
155	¶202.8 — Expressions of Unholy Forms of Sexual Behaviors and Gender Identifications	202.8	Constitution	Springfield Oaks GMC Springfield, Georgia (USA)	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 202 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					
156	¶405.8 — Statement Opposing the Ordination of Homosexuality	405.8	Ministry & Local Church	Springfield Oaks GMC Springfield, Georgia (USA)	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 405 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					
157	¶405.9 — Opposition to Ordination of Transgendered People	405.9	Ministry & Local Church	Springfield Oaks GMC Springfield, Georgia (USA)	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 405 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					
159	Editorial to ¶606.3	606.3	Conferences	North Georgia Conference Delegation	Deferred

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ID	TITLE		COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 606 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
160	To Amend Article II of the Proposed Constitution	C - 202 Article II	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
161	To Amend Article V of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article V	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
162	To Amend Article V.1 of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article V.1	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
163	To Amend Article V.2 of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article V.2	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
164	Editorial Amendment to ¶505	505	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 5 per the Plan of Organization.				
165	To Amend Article V.3 of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article V.3	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
166	To Amend Article V.7 of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article V.7	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
167	To Amend Article V.12 of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article V.12	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
168	To Amend Article V.14/16 of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article V.14 / 16	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
169	Editorial Amendment to ¶515	515	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 5 per the Plan of Organization.				
170	To Amend Article VI of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article VI	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
171	To Amend Article VI.3 of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article VI.3	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
172	To Add Article VI.12 to the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article VI.12	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
173	To Amend Article VII of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article VII	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				

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ID	TITLE	¶	COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
174	To Amend Article VII.4 of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article VII.4	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
175	To Add Article VII.5 to the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article VII.5	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
176	To Add Article VII.6 to the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article VII.6	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
177	Editorial Amendment to ¶516	516	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: The Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 5 per the Plan of Organization.					
178	To Amend Article VIII of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article VIII	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
179	To Amend Article IX of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article IX	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
180	To Amend Article X of the Proposed Constitution	C - 203 Article X	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
181	To Amend Article XI.1 of the Proposed Constitution	C - 204 Article XI.1	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
182	To Add Article XI.2 to the Proposed Constitution	C - 204 Article XI.2	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
183	To Add Adding Article XIII to the Proposed Constitution	C - 204 Article XIII	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
184	Regional Conferences Eliminated	609	Conferences	First Methodist Church Council Siloam Springs, Arkansas (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: Paragraph 609 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.					
185	To Add Adding Article XIV to the Proposed Constitution	C - 204 Article XIV	Constitution	Shreve Community Church Shreve, Ohio (USA)	Accepted
RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.					
186	Editorial Amendment to ¶517	517	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
RATIONALE: The Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 5 per the Plan of Organization.					
187	Empowers the Annual Conference to Provide for the General Wellbeing of its Clergy	611.9	Conferences	First Methodist Church Council Siloam Springs, Arkansas (USA)	Deferred
RATIONALE: Paragraph 611.9 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.					

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ID	TITLE	¶	COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
188	Editorial Amendment to ¶518	518	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 5 per the Plan of Organization.				
189	Editorial Amendment to ¶519	519	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 5 per the Plan of Organization.				
190	Editorial Amendment to ¶520	520	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 520 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
191	Editorial Amendment to ¶521	521	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 5 per the Plan of Organization.				
192	Editorial Amendment to ¶522	522	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 522 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
193	Editorial Amendment to ¶604	604	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Conferences Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 6 per the Plan of Organization.				
194	Editorial Amendment to ¶605	605	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 605 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
195	Editorial Amendment to ¶606	606	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Conferences Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 6 per the Plan of Organization.				
196	Allegiance as Christian Witness	202.1	Constitution	Rev. Chance Robinson Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 202 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
197	Editorial Amendment to ¶607	607	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 607 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
198	Editorial Amendment to ¶608	608	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Conferences Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 6 per the Plan of Organization.				
199	Deletion of Constitution Article VII and BDD ¶609	C - 203 Article VII	Constitution	Rev. Kerry R. Wood Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
200	Editorial Amendment to ¶609	609	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 609 is within the bounds of the Connectional Organization Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
201	Editorial Amendment to ¶806	806	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 806 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
202	Editorial Amendment to ¶807	807	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 807 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
203	Editorial Amendment to ¶808	808	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 808 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
204	Editorial Amendment to ¶809	809	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted

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ID	TITLE		COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 809 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
205	Editorial Amendment to ¶810	810	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 810 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
206	Editorial Amendment to ¶811	811	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 811 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
207	Editorial Amendment to ¶814	814	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 814 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
208	Editorial Amendment to ¶820	820	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 820 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
209	Editorial Amendment to ¶822	822	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 822 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
210	Editorial Amendment to ¶902	902	Financial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Financial Administration Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 9 per the Plan of Organization.				
211	Editorial Amendment to ¶904	904	Financial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Financial Administration Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 9 per the Plan of Organization.				
212	Editorial Amendment to ¶908	908	Financial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Financial Administration Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 9 per the Plan of Organization.				
213	Editorial Amendment to ¶910	910	Financial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Financial Administration Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 9 per the Plan of Organization.				
214	Editorial Petition to Delete ¶705	705	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Connectional Organization Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 7 per the Plan of Organization.				
215	Editorial Petition to Delete ¶706	706	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Connectional Organization Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 7 per the Plan of Organization.				
216	Editorial Amendment to ¶801	801	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 801 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
217	Editorial Amendment to ¶802	802	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 802 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
218	Editorial Amendment to ¶803	803	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 803 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				

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ID	TITLE	¶	COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
219	Editorial Amendment to ¶805	805	Judicial Administration	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 805 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
220	Editorial Amendment to ¶610	610	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Conferences Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 6 per the Plan of Organization.				
221	Editorial Petition to Delete ¶702	702	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Connectional Organization Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 7 per the Plan of Organization.				
222	Editorial Petition to Delete ¶703	703	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Connectional Organization Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 7 per the Plan of Organization.				
223	Editorial Petition to Delete ¶704	704	Connectional Organization	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Connectional Organization Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 7 per the Plan of Organization.				
224	Editorial Amendment to ¶611	611	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: The Conferences Committee may act upon editorial amendments to Part 6 per the Plan of Organization.				
225	Editorial Amendment to ¶612	612	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 612 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
226	Editorial Amendment to ¶613	613	Conferences	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 613 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
227	Separate Callings for Deacons and Elders	409 & Others	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Keith Katterheinrich Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 409 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
228	¶420 — Interim Ministers	420	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Jane Vaughn Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 420 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
229	Ending Block Voting	409.2	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Robert Barnes Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 409 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
230	Certification of Mission Organizations	611	Connectional Organization	Mega Manila Connectional Council	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 611 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
231	Petition to Remove Language Restricting Approved Educational Programs Geographically	407.1	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Matthew Abel Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 407 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
232	Approved Theological Schools	407.2	Ministry & Local Church	Dr. Jessica LaGrone Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 407 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
233	Parental Leave Restoration	417.6	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Hannah Hutchinson Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 417 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				

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ID	TITLE		COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
234	Worship as New Creation People	103.9	Constitution	Rev. Jeff Jacob Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 103 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
235	¶506 — Delete	506	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: As this petition is not modifying but deleting a paragraph, the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee, per the Plan of Organization, may consider this petition as it falls within the limited agenda.				
236	¶507 — (DELETE) Responsibilities	507	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Transitional Leadership Council	Accepted
	RATIONALE: As this petition is not modifying but deleting a paragraph, the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee, per the Plan of Organization, may consider this petition as it falls within the limited agenda.				
237	Expand Bachelor Degree Course Acceptance to US and Western Europe	407.1 407.2	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Daniel Fulton Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 407 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
238	¶604.11 Resolution — Recognition of Congregational Singing Resources	604.11	Conferences	Dr. Sterling Allen Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: While Paragraph 604 is open under the limited agenda as laid out in the Plan of Organization, this petition does not ask the General Conference to make any changes to ¶604.11. Rather, it asks the Conference to adopt a resource based on the enumerated powers contained in 604.11. This is outside the scope of the limited agenda. Furthermore, the resources proposed for endorsement may not yet have been available to all delegates.				
239	Ordination of Deacons	409.2	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Jeffrey Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 409 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
240	Ordination of Elders	410.1	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Jeffrey Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 410 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
241	Open Meetings	606.4	Conferences	Rev. Jeffrey Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 606 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
242	Minimum Standards For Annual Conference Websites	611.11	Conferences	Rev. Jeffrey Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 611 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
243	Financial Transparency	612.3 705.5	Financial Administration	Rev. Jeffrey Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Financial Administration Committee as this item falls within their stated purview (“...[G]ive oversight to connectional funding matters...”) within the Plan of Organization.				
244	Hybrid Episcopacy Model	500, Et. Al.	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Florida Conference Delegation	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee as this item falls within their stated purview (“...[M]atters such as the question of a general or residential episcopacy...[T]he process for the election and assignment of bishops...[E]piscopal area boundaries...”) within the Plan of Organization.				
245	Capping Salaries	505 610 / 704	Episcopacy & Superintendency	Rev. Jeffrey Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 505 is within the bounds of the Episcopacy & Superintendency Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
246	Removal of Regional Conferences	609 / 601 604.7, 10, 16	Conferences	Rev. Jeffrey Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Accepted

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ID	TITLE		COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 609 is within the bounds of the Conferences Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
247	Restricting Grounds For Establishing Annual Conferences	610.1 351	Conferences	Rev. Jeffrey Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraphs 610 and 351 are not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
248	The Racial Theology of the GMC	Resolution	Constitution	Rev. Jeffrey Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: This petition does not fall within the stated guidelines for the limited agenda as laid out in the Plan of Organization.				
249	Addition of the “Catechism of The Global Methodist Church” to “Part One: Doctrine”	109	Constitution	Rev. John Howard Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 109 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
250	Petition to Strengthen Our Stance on Sexuality	202.7-9	Constitution	Rev. Daniel Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Not Accepted
	RATIONALE: Unable to verify ten co-signers who are members of the Global Methodist Church				
251	402 — Certified Lay Ministers - Clarity of Approved Training	402.2	Ministry & Local Church	South Georgia Delegation	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 402 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
252	Inactive Deacon Amendment	409.3	Ministry & Local Church	Hanfield GMC Church Council Marion, Indiana (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 409 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
253	Inactive Elder Amendment	410.3	Ministry & Local Church	Hanfield GMC Church Council Marion, Indiana (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 410 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
254	Senior Status Clergy Voting Rights Amendment	418	Ministry & Local Church	Hanfield GMC Church Council Marion, Indiana (USA)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 418 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
255	Annual Conference Affiliate Membership for Clergy	419	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Keihwan Ryoo Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 419 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
256	Transfer of Authority for Health Insurance to Annual Conference	706.1	Connectional Organization	Rev. Jason Rice Individual (Clergy)	Not Accepted
	RATIONALE: Unable to verify ten co-signers who are members of the Global Methodist Church				
257	Annual Conference Affiliate Membership for Churches	354	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Keihwan Ryoo Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 354 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
258	2024 Petition and Mandate on Behalf of “The Pacific Islanders National Council” (PINC) of the Global Methodist Church	Resolution	Connectional Organization	First Tongan GMC Los Angeles, California (USA)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: This petition does not fall within the stated guidelines for the limited agenda as laid out in the Plan of Organization.				
259	Petition for Fuller Theology of Marriage	202.7	Constitution	Rev. Daniel Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 202 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
260	Petition for Specificity Regarding Sexual Sins	202.8	Constitution	Rev. Daniel Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Deferred

2024 CONVENING GENERAL CONFERENCE PETITION NUMERICAL INDEX

ID	TITLE		COMMITTEE	PETITIONER	DISPOSITION
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 202 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
261	Petition for Accountability Regarding Sexual Sin	202.9	Constitution	Rev. Daniel Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 202 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
262	Voting Rights for the Appointed	402.1	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Daniel Rickman Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 402 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
263	Ending Block Voting	410.1.d	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Robert Barnes Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 410 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
264	Ending Block Voting	410.1.e	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Robert Barnes Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 410 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
265	Amend Potential Transitional Connectional Commissions	705.5	Connectional Organization	Rev. Jason Rice Individual (Clergy)	Not Accepted
	RATIONALE: Unable to verify ten co-signers who are members of the Global Methodist Church				
266	The Celebration of Holy Marriage Petition 202.7	202.7	Constitution	Rev. Stewart Kouba Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 202 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
267	The Celebration of Holy Marriage Petition 202.8	202.8	Constitution	Rev. Stewart Kouba Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 202 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
268	The Celebration of Holy Marriage Petition 403.1	403.1	Ministry & Local Church	Rev. Stewart Kouba Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 403 is not part of the limited agenda, nor are the contents of this petition.				
269	The Celebration of Holy Marriage Petition 704.5	704.5	Connectional Organization	Rev. Stewart Kouba Individual (Clergy)	Deferred
	RATIONALE: While Paragraph 704 is open under the limited agenda as laid out in the Plan of Organization, the contents of this petition are doctrinal in nature and thus do not fall within the limited agenda.				
270	The Celebration of Holy Marriage Petition 808.1.g	808.1.g	Judicial Administration	Rev. Stewart Kouba Individual (Clergy)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 808 is within the bounds of the Judicial Administration Committee per the Plan of Organization.				
271	Draft New Articles of Faith for the Global Methodist Church	Resolution	Constitution	Daybreak Church Council Williamsburg, Virginia (USA)	Accepted
	RATIONALE: This petition is within the bounds of the Constitution Committee as stated in the Plan of Organization.				
272	Specifying Global History & Polity	407.3.a	Ministry & Local Church	Transitional Commission on Ministry	Accepted
	RATIONALE: Paragraph 407 is within the bounds of the Ministry & Local Church Committee per the Plan of Organization.				

PRE-CONFERENCE PETITIONS REPORT ERRATA LOG

THIS PAGE IS INTENDED TO BE A RECORD OF ANY CHANGES (OTHER THAN MINOR PUNCTUATION OR FORMATTING) TO THE PETITIONS, IS ATTACHED AS THE FINAL PAGE OF THE PRE-CONFERENCE PETITIONS REPORT, AND SHOULD BE CONSIDERED PART OF THE REPORT. PRINTED EDITIONS WERE FINALIZED ON SEPTEMBER 13, 2024 AND INCORPORATE THESE CHANGES.

AUGUST 30, 2024

- 130 Pagination of Bullet Points - EN
(For all translations to match)
- 131 Pagination of Listed Points - EN
(For all translations to match)
- 146 ¶ Correction in Header - All Translations
(403 ⇒ 407)
- 162 Duplicated the Body of # 163 - EN
- 169 Spelling Correction - Committee - EN

SEPTEMBER 6, 2024

Committee Index - All Translations

- 272 Page Number Corrected to 337
- 269 Corrected Petition Number (266 ⇒ 269)

Header Corrections - Multiple Translations

- 195 Paragraph # Corrected (605 ⇒ 606)
- 223 Paragraph # Corrected (703 ⇒ 704)

Multi Page # and/or Page Count in Title Block
Corrected or Eliminated as Needed

SEPTEMBER 13, 2024

- 045 Assigned to Connectional Organization
from Ministry & Local Church per the
References Committee
- 112 Assigned to the Plenary Session from
Connectional Organization per the
References Committee
- 113 Assigned to the Plenary Session from
Episcopacy & Superintendency
per the References Committee

Committee Index - All Translations

Modified to Reflect Above Changes

Numerical Index - All Translations

Modified to Reflect Above Changes

Miscellaneous Minor Proofreading Corrections