

Comparing the 2016 Book of Discipline with the 2024 Book of Discipline

June 2, 2024

NOTE: The words that have been ~~struck through~~ are what was removed in 2024 from the 2016 language. The words underlined were added in 2024.

1. LGBTQ Clergy¹

1. 2016 Version of paragraph 304:

- i. 304. Qualifications for Ordination-1. Those whom the Church ordains shall be conscious of God's call to ordained ministry, and their call shall be acknowledged and authenticated by the Church. God's call has many manifestations, and the Church cannot structure a single test of authenticity. Nevertheless, the experience of the Church and the needs of its ministry require certain qualities of faith, life, and practice from those who seek ordination as deacons and elders. In order that The United Methodist Church may be assured that those persons who present themselves as candidates for ordained ministry are truly called of God, the Church expects persons seeking ordination to:
 - a) Have a personal faith in Christ and be committed to Christ as Savior and Lord.
 - b) Nurture and cultivate spiritual disciplines and patterns of holiness.
 - c) Teach and model generous Christian giving with a focus on tithing as God's standard of giving
 - d) Acknowledge a call by God to give themselves completely to ordained ministry following Jesus' pattern of love and service.
 - e) Communicate persuasively the Christian faith in both oral and written form.
 - f) Make a commitment to lead the whole Church in loving service to humankind.
 - g) Give evidence of God's gifts for ordained ministry, evidence of God's grace in their lives, and promise of future usefulness in the mission of the Church.
 - h) Be persons in whom the community can place trust and confidence.
 - i) Accept that Scripture contains all things necessary for salvation through faith in God through Jesus Christ; be competent in the disciplines of Scripture, theology, church history, and Church polity; possess the skills essential to the practice of ordained ministry; and lead in making disciples for Jesus Christ.

¹ Petition 20173 - "Chastity" instead of "Celibacy" (¶304.2G) – ADCA page 623; Petition 20177-FO-¶304.3-G - A Simple Plan #3

j) Be accountable to The United Methodist Church, accept its Doctrinal Standards and Discipline and authority, accept the supervision of those appointed to this ministry, and be prepared to live in the covenant of its ordained ministers.

2. For the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness to the Christian gospel, and in consideration of the influence of an ordained minister on the lives of other persons both within and outside the Church, the Church expects those who seek ordination to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life. To this end, they agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all personal relationships, ~~fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness~~, social responsibility, and growth in grace and in the knowledge and love of God.

2024 Version:

2. For the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness to the Christian gospel, and in consideration of the influence of an ordained minister on the lives of other persons both within and outside the Church, the Church expects those who seek ordination to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life. To this end, they agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all personal relationships, social responsibility, and faithful sexual intimacy expressed through fidelity, monogamy, commitment, mutual affection and respect, careful and honest communication, mutual consent, and growth in grace and in the knowledge and love of God.

~~*3. While persons set apart by the Church for ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition and the pressures of society, they are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living in the world. The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore, self-avowed practicing homosexuals¹ are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.²*~~

4. The United Methodist Church entrusts those persons who are in the ordained ministry with primary responsibility for maintaining standards of education and preparation for ordination. Having been originally recommended by a charge conference or equivalent body (§ 310.1e) and by authorization of the ordained members in full connection with the annual conference, according to the procedures set out in the Book of Discipline for the examination and approval of candidates for ordination, persons are elected to membership in the annual conference and ordained by the bishop.

5. In all votes regarding license, ordination, or conference membership, the requirements set forth herein are minimum requirements. Each person voting is expected to vote prayerfully based on personal judgement of the applicant's gifts, evidence of God's grace, and promise of future usefulness for the mission of the

Church. The district committee on the ordained ministry and the Board of Ordained Ministry shall not approve or recommend any person for candidacy, licensing, commissioning, or ordination who does not meet the qualifications of ¶ 304.1-3, based on the full examination and thorough inquiry into the person's fitness by the committee and board (see Judicial Council Decisions 1343 and 1344). The bishop presiding in the clergy session shall rule any such unqualified candidate out of order and not eligible to be acted upon.

~~1. "Self-avowed practicing homosexual" is understood to mean that a person openly acknowledges to a bishop, district superintendent, district committee of ordained ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry, or clergy session that the person is a practicing homosexual; or is living in a same-sex marriage, domestic partnership or civil union, or is a person who publicly states she or he is a practicing homosexual. See Judicial Council Decisions 702, 708, 722, 725, 764, 844, 984, 1020, 1341. 2. See Judicial Council Decisions 984, 985, 1027, 1028~~

2. LGBTQ Marriage²

1. 2016 version:

- i. C) Marriage -We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between a man and a woman. We believe that God's blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union. We reject social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage. We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

2. 2024 version:

- i. D. Marriage

Within the church, we affirm marriage as a sacred, lifelong covenant that brings two people of faith, an adult man and woman of consenting age, or two adult persons of consenting age into union with one another and into deeper relationship with God and the religious community.

While The United Methodist Church does not recognize marriage as a sacrament, we celebrate and cherish this union as an expression of the couple's faith, grounded in their relationship with God and one another. Marriage thus reflects a continued willingness to grow together in Christ and a commitment to cultivate a covenantal bond that encompasses intimacy, grace, and love.

As members of the larger society, we also affirm the importance of civil marriage, the legal recognition of domestic unions by the state. Such legal recognition is vital for guaranteeing family stability and the orderly regulation of inheritances, and for providing assurance that spouses and children are afforded all the rights, benefits, and protections to which they are entitled.

3. Individual Church Authority

1. LGBTQ Clergy

- i. 2016 Version of Section VIII. Appointment-Making:

² Petition 20730 - Revised Social Principles -¶¶161 and 162 - ADCA page 208

¶ 425. Responsibility-1. 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. Appointments are to be made with consideration of the gifts and evidence of God's grace of those appointed, to the needs, characteristics, and opportunities of congregations and institutions, and with faithfulness to the commitment to an open itineracy. Open itineracy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age, except for the provisions of mandatory retirement. Annual conferences shall, in their training of staff-parish relations committees, emphasize the open nature of itineracy and prepare congregations to receive the gifts and graces of appointed clergy without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age. The concept of itineracy is important, and sensitive attention should be given in appointing clergy with physical challenges to responsibilities and duties that meet their gifts and graces. Through appointment-making, the connectional nature of the United Methodist system is made visible.

2024 version:

1. 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. Appointments are to be made with consideration of the gifts and evidence of God's grace of those appointed, to the needs, characteristics, and opportunities of congregations and institutions, and with faithfulness to the commitment to an open itineracy. Open itineracy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnicity ~~origin~~, gender, color, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or age, except for the provisions of mandatory retirement. Annual conferences shall, in their training of staff-parish relations committees, emphasize the open nature of itineracy and prepare congregations to receive the gifts and graces of appointed clergy without regard to race, ethnicity ~~origin~~, gender, color, disability, marital status, economic condition, sexual orientation or age. The concept of itineracy is important, and sensitive attention should be given in appointing clergy with physical challenges to responsibilities and duties that meet their gifts and graces. Through appointment-making, the connectional nature of the United Methodist system is made visible.

Appointment-making across conference lines shall be encouraged as a way of creating mobility and open itineracy. The jurisdictional committee on ordained ministry will cooperate with bishops and cabinets in providing information on supply and demand within the jurisdiction.

2. The United Methodist Church promotes and holds in high esteem the opportunity of an inclusive church (¶ 4. Article IV) with the formation of open itineracy (¶ 425.1).

3. 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. When such appointments are made, bishops, cabinets, and boards of ordained ministry shall provide specific training for the clergypersons so appointed and for their congregations.

ii. Paragraph 427 remains in effect:

¶ 427. Criteria—Appointments shall 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 district superintendent shall develop with the pastor and the committees on pastor-parish relations of all churches profiles that reflect the needs, characteristics, and opportunities for mission of the charge consistent with the Church's statement of purpose. These profiles shall be reviewed annually and updated when appropriate to include:

a) The general situation in which a congregation finds itself in a particular setting: size, financial condition, quality of lay leadership, special needs for pastoral ministry, and history.

b) The convictional stance of the congregation: theology; prejudices, if any; spiritual life.

c) The ministry of the congregation among its people for the sake of the community: service programs, basis for adding new members, reasons for losing members, mission to community and world, forms of witness.

d) The qualities and functions of pastoral ministry needed to fulfill the mission, goals, and special needs of the congregation.

2. LGBTQ Marriage³

Add new subparagraphs after ¶ 419.12:

13. The superintendent shall not penalize any clergy for performing, or refraining from performing, a same-sex marriage service.

14. The superintendent shall neither require any local church to hold or prohibit a local church from holding a same-sex marriage service on property owned by a local church.

³ Petition 20717 - Local Discernment of Marriage and Wedding Services (¶419.12-G) – ADCA page 980

4. Judicial Council Decision about Local Church Authority over Wedding Ceremonies:

Decision Number 1503

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May 03, 2024

IN RE: Petition for Declaratory Decision from the 2024 General Conference on the Meaning, Application, and Effect of ¶ 2533 of the 2016 Book of Discipline Concerning the Right of the Board of Trustees of a Local Church to Adopt Policies Prohibiting the Conduct of Same-Sex Marriage Ceremonies

Digest

Nothing in ¶ 2533 of the *2016 Book of Discipline* prevents the Board of Trustees of a local church from adopting policies prohibiting the conduct of worship services that include same-sex marriage ceremonies.

Statement of Facts

The General Conference during plenary session, on May 3, 2024, adopted a motion to request a declaratory decision on the following question:

With the provisions passed by this General Conference, does the language of Paragraph 2533, “the board of Trustees shall not interfere with the pastor in the use of any said property for religious services or other proper meetings or purposes recognized by the law, usages and customs of the UMC...” prevent local churches from creating policies that would prohibit pastors from conducting worship services that include the marriage of same-sex couples in a local church.

Jurisdiction

The Judicial Council has jurisdiction pursuant to ¶ 2610 of the *2016 Book of Discipline* [hereinafter *The Discipline*].

Analysis and Rationale

The pertinent paragraph in *The Discipline* states:

¶ 2533. *Board of Trustees' Powers and Limitations*—1. Subject to the direction of the charge conference, the board of trustees 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 therewith, provided that the board of trustees shall not violate the rights of any local church organization elsewhere granted in the Discipline; provided further, that the board of trustees shall not 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 United 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 district superintendent; and provided further, that pews in The United Methodist Church shall always be free; and provided further, that the church local conference may assign certain of these duties to a building committee as set forth in ¶ 2544 or the chairperson of the parsonage committee, if one exists. [emphasis added]

Nothing in ¶ 2533 prevents the Board of Trustees of a local church from adopting policies prohibiting the conduct of worship services that include same-sex marriage ceremonies. The answer to the question posed in this Petition for Declaratory Decision: **NO**.

Decision

Nothing in ¶ 2533 of the *2016 Book of Discipline* prevents the Board of Trustees of a local church from adopting policies prohibiting the conduct of worship services that include same-sex marriage ceremonies.

5. The **2016** Resolution 6111 related to **Israel** was:

6111. Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land

We join with Palestinian Christians as well as our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters in feeling a deep sense of rootedness to the land that has special meaning for our three religious traditions. We celebrate the diversity of religious customs and traditions throughout the Middle East.

Jerusalem is sacred to all the children of Abraham: Jews, Muslims, and Christians. We have a vision of a shared Jerusalem as a city of peace and reconciliation, where indigenous Palestinians and Israelis can live as neighbors and, along with visitors and tourists, have access to holy sites and exercise freedom of religious expression. The peaceful resolution of Jerusalem's status is crucial to the success of the whole process of making a just and lasting peace between Palestinians and Israelis.

We seek for all people in the Middle East an end to military occupation, freedom from violence, and full respect for the human rights of all under international law.

Whereas, the prophet Isaiah cautioned against coveting the lands and homes of one's neighbors: "Doom to those who acquire house after house, who annex field to field until there is no more space left and only you live alone in the land" (Isaiah 5:8); and

Whereas, the continuing confiscation of Palestinian land for construction of settlements and the building of a separation wall violates human rights, subverts the peace process, destroys the

hope of both Israelis and Palestinians who are working for and longing for peace, and fosters a sense of desperation that can only lead to further violence; and

Whereas, continued and often intensified closures, curfews, dehumanizing check points, home demolitions, uprooted trees, bulldozed fields, and confiscation of Palestinian land and water by the government of Israel have devastated economic infrastructure and development in the West Bank and Gaza, have caused a massive deterioration of the living standards of all Palestinians

. . . and an increasing sense of hopelessness and frustration; and Whereas, targeted assassinations, suicide bombings, and attacks against civilians by both Israelis and Palestinians heighten the fear and suffering of all, and have led to many deaths of Palestinian and Israeli children; and

Whereas, people in the United States, through their taxes, provide several billion dollars in economic and military assistance to the State of Israel each year, which allows for the building of bypass roads and settlements that are illegal according to the Fourth Geneva Convention; and

Whereas, a number of Israeli and international companies profit from the building and maintaining of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land in a variety of ways, and many churches and Christians have funds invested in some of these companies; and

Whereas human rights organizations have documented that private foreign donors, including Jewish and Christian individuals and nonprofit organizations, have provided financial support for settlements and that some of these donations are tax-deductible; and

Whereas, the Church continues to work with ecumenical and interfaith bodies to advocate for Palestinian self-determination and an end to Israeli occupation; to affirm Israel's right to exist within secure borders; to affirm the right of return for Palestinian refugees under international law; to call for region-wide disarmament; to urge Israelis and Palestinians to stop human rights violations and attacks on civilians, such as targeted assassinations and suicide bombings; and to urge the US government to initiate an arms embargo on the entire Middle East region;

Therefore, be it resolved, that The United Methodist Church opposes continued military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources, the destruction of Palestinian homes, the continued building of illegal Jewish settlements, and any vision of a "Greater Israel" that includes the occupied territories and the whole of Jerusalem and its surroundings.

In our call for an end to the Israeli occupation we affirm the Church's commitment to nonviolent responses to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and acknowledge the need to hear the voices of all those-Muslim, Christian, and Jewish-harmed by the conflict, including the Palestinian Christians as voiced in the Kairos Palestine document.

Be it further resolved, that we urge the US government to end all military aid to the region, and second to redistribute the large amount of aid now given to Israel and Egypt; to support economic development efforts of nongovernmental organizations throughout the region, including religious institutions, human rights groups, labor unions, and professional groups within Palestinian communities.

The United Methodist Church requests that all governments, especially that of the United States, work in cooperation with the United Nations to urge the State of Israel to:

1. cease the confiscation of Palestinian lands and water for any reason;
2. cease the building of new, or expansion of existing, settlements and/or bypass roads in the occupied territories including East Jerusalem;
3. lift the closures and curfews on all Palestinian towns by completely withdrawing Israeli military forces to the Green Line (the 1948 ceasefire line between Israel and the West Bank);
4. dismantle that segment of the Wall of Separation constructed since May 2002 that is not being built on the Green Line but on Palestinian land that is separating Palestinian farmers from their fields.

We also urge the Palestinian Authority and all Palestinian religious leaders to continue to publicly condemn violence against Israeli civilians and to use nonviolent acts of disobedience to resist the occupation and the illegal settlements.

We further call on all nations to prohibit:

1. any financial support by individuals or organizations for the construction and maintenance of settlements; and
2. the import of products made by companies in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.

We ask all companies that profit from and/or support settlements through their business activities to examine these and stop any business that contributes to serious violations of international law, promotes systemic discrimination, or otherwise supports ongoing military occupation.

The United Methodist Church does not support a boycott of products made in Israel. Our opposition is to products made by Israeli companies operating in occupied Palestinian territories.

We urge all United Methodists in the US to:

1. advocate with the US administration and Congress to implement the aforementioned steps;
2. urge the US government to examine the role played by donations from tax-exempt charities in support of discriminatory and other illegal aspects of Israeli settlements, and develop recommendations to ensure that tax-exempt funds do not support illegal settlements and other violations of international law.

We urge all United Methodists to:

1. read about the suffering of Israelis and Palestinians and nonviolent ways of ending the Israeli/Palestinian conflict from the perspective of all faith communities including the Kairos Palestine document; and
2. encourage members of each congregation to study the Israeli/Palestinian conflict from all perspectives by inviting speakers to church events, reading books, using audiovisual resources in

educational forums, and getting information from websites. We especially commend the 2010 British Methodist Church's call "on the Methodist people to support and engage with [a] boycott of Israeli goods emanating from illegal settlements," as well as a call for nonviolent actions issued by several annual conferences.

3. provide financial support to the Palestinian people through contributions to the General Board of Global Ministries;

4. support, and participate in, the work of international peace and human rights organizations, such as the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine & Israel and Christian Peacemaker Teams, to provide protection for Palestinians and Israelis seeking nonviolently to end the occupation; and

5. reach out to local synagogues, mosques, and Christian faith groups by engaging in interfaith and ecumenical dialogue on nonviolent ways to promote justice and peace in the Holy Land; and

That the General Board of Global Ministries, working together with the General Board of Church and Society and interfaith organizations, develop advocacy packets for use in local congregations to promote a just and lasting peace and human rights for all in the region.

ADOPTED 2004

READOPTED 2008 AMENDED AND READOPTED 2012

RESOLUTION #6111, 2012 Book of Resolutions

RESOLUTION #6073, 2008 Book of Resolutions

RESOLUTION #312, 2004 Book of Resolutions

See Social Principles, ¶ 165.

6. The 2024 Revisions are:

Amend 4th sentence in 2nd paragraph:

Moving ~~We oppose governments moving their embassies to Jerusalem as a hindrance to just and lasting peace.~~

Amend 5th paragraph:

Whereas, the continuing confiscation of Palestinian land for construction of settlements and the building of a separation wall on Palestinian lands violates human rights, subverts the peace process, destroys the hope of both Israelis and Palestinians who are working for and longing for peace, and fosters a sense of desperation that can only lead to further violence; and

Amend 10th paragraph:

Whereas human rights organizations have documented that private foreign donors, including Jewish and Christian individuals and nonprofit organizations, have provided financial support for illegal settlements and that some of these donations are tax-deductible; and

Amend 11th paragraph:

Whereas, the church continues to work with ecumenical and interfaith bodies to advocate for Palestinian self-determination and an end to Israeli occupation; to affirm Israel's right to exist within secure borders; to affirm the right of return for Palestinian refugees under international law; to call for region-wide disarmament; to urge Israelis and Palestinians to stop human rights violations and attacks on civilians, such as targeted assassinations and suicide bombings; and to urge ~~the US~~ all governments to initiate an arms embargo on the entire Middle East region;

Amend 12th paragraph:

Therefore, be it resolved, that The United Methodist Church opposes continued military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, ~~and East Jerusalem, and also the Syrian Golan Heights,~~ the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources, the destruction of Palestinian homes, ~~the continued blockade of Gaza where over half the residents are children, the military detention of Palestinian children—often without trial—~~the continued building of illegal Jewish settlements, and any vision of a "Greater Israel" that includes the occupied territories and the whole of Jerusalem and its surroundings.

Amend 14th paragraph:

~~Be it further resolved,~~ that we urge ~~the US~~all governments to end all military aid, ~~arms transfers and arms sales~~ to the region, ~~and second to end all arms purchases from companies in the Middle East, and~~ to redistribute the large amount of military aid now given to Israel and Egypt to fund humanitarian health and educational work such as that of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), to support economic development efforts of nongovernmental organizations throughout the region, including religious institutions, human rights groups, labor unions, and professional groups within Palestinian communities.

Amend 16th paragraph:

We also urge the Palestinian Authority and all Palestinian religious and political leaders to continue to publicly condemn violence against Israeli civilians and to use nonviolent acts of disobedience to resist the occupation and the illegal settlements.

Amend 18th paragraph:

We ask all companies that profit from and/or support settlements through their business activities to examine these and stop any business that contributes to serious violations of international law, promotes systemic discrimination or otherwise supports ongoing military occupation or attempted annexation.

Amend 19th paragraph:

The United Methodist Church does not support a boycott of products made in Israel. Our opposition is to products made by Israeli companies operating in occupied Palestinian territories.

7. The 2024 Resolution 9999 related to Israel is:

1. Petition 20539-CA-R9999-G Exclude Government Debt of Countries Involved in Prolonged Military Occupations

WHEREAS, Amos 5:24 (CEB) says "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" and Psalm 103:6 (CEB) says "The LORD works righteousness; does justice for all who are oppressed," and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church, through its general agencies and annual conferences, has endeavored to be accountable to our Social Principles through screening against investment in military occupations, and

WHEREAS, The United Methodist Church's Social Principles (§ 165D) state ". . . we endorse the United Nations, its related bodies, the International Court of Justice, and the International Criminal Court as the best instruments now in existence to achieve a world of justice and law," and

WHEREAS, three nations have held subject populations under prolonged military occupation: Israel has occupied the Palestinian territories since 1967, Turkey has occupied Northern Cyprus since 1974, and Morocco has occupied Western Sahara since 1976, thus denying the subject populations their self-determination in violation of the system established by the Charter of the United Nations and International Law in general, and

WHEREAS, the above-named occupying powers have been named in United Nations Security Council resolutions and/or International Court of Justice rulings as having engaged in prolonged military occupations and are thereby violators of international law

and are responsible for human rights abuses, generally including reduction of food assistance to refugees, failure to protect civilian persons, land confiscation, home demolition, and violence against civilians, and

WHEREAS, government debt (also called sovereign debt), especially that held in bonds denominated in foreign currencies, is unrestricted funds that a government uses at its own discretion and without any formal mechanism for advocacy by the bond holder, unlike stocks that represent an ownership interest in a corporation and provide a platform to advocate for change, and

WHEREAS, holders of the government debt of countries complicit in prolonged military occupations are effectively financing the high military expenditures of those governments that are necessitated by that military occupation and holders of that debt are therefore earning money in the form of interest payments from the human rights abuses and violations of international law of those countries, and

WHEREAS, Wespeth Benefits and Investments, the holder of United Methodist pension funds (formally named the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits), in their human rights investment guideline says “Wespeth also may exclude from investment the sovereign debt of any country demonstrating a prolonged and systematic pattern of human rights abuses,”

Therefore, be it resolved, that the General Conference prayerfully calls upon the boards and agencies throughout the connection and its own investment managers to add to their human rights guidelines explicit language with regard to governmental debt so as to exclude those governments maintaining a prolonged military occupation that have been the subject of United Nations Security Council resolutions and/or International Court of Justice rulings, and to align their portfolios accordingly, avoiding the governmental debt of each such country until the time when each government ends their military occupation

8. Abortion

1. 2016 Social Principles:

i. K) Abortion-

The beginning of life and the ending of life are the God-given boundaries of human existence. While individuals have always had some degree of control over when they would die, they now have the awesome power to determine when and even whether new individuals will be born. Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion.

But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother and the unborn child.

We recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures by certified medical providers. We support parental, guardian, or other responsible adult notification and consent before abortions can be performed on girls who have not yet reached the age of legal adulthood. We cannot affirm

abortion as an acceptable means of birth control, and we unconditionally reject it as a means of gender selection or eugenics (see Resolution 3184).

We oppose the use of late-term abortion known as dilation and extraction (partial-birth abortion) and call for the end of this practice except when the physical life of the mother is in danger and no other medical procedure is available, or in the case of severe fetal anomalies incompatible with life. This procedure shall be performed only by certified medical providers. Before providing their services, abortion providers should be required to offer women the option of anesthesia.

We call all Christians to a searching and prayerful inquiry into the sorts of conditions that may cause them to consider abortion. We entrust God to provide guidance, wisdom, and discernment to those facing an unintended pregnancy.

The Church shall offer ministries to reduce unintended pregnancies. We commit our Church to continue to provide nurturing ministries to those who terminate a pregnancy, to those in the midst of a crisis pregnancy, and to those who give birth.

We mourn and are committed to promoting the diminishment of high abortion rates. The Church shall encourage ministries to reduce unintended pregnancies such as comprehensive, age-appropriate sexuality education, advocacy in regard to contraception, and support of initiatives that enhance the quality of life for all women and girls around the globe.

Young adult women disproportionately face situations in which they feel that they have no choice due to financial, educational, relational, or other circumstances beyond their control. The Church and its local congregations and campus ministries should be in the forefront of supporting existing ministries and developing new ministries that help such women in their communities. They should also support those crisis pregnancy centers and pregnancy resource centers that compassionately help women explore all options related to unplanned pregnancy. We particularly encourage the Church, the government, and social service agencies to support and facilitate the option of adoption. (See ¶ 161M.) We affirm and encourage the Church to assist the ministry of crisis pregnancy centers and pregnancy resource centers that compassionately help women find feasible alternatives to abortion.

Governmental laws and regulations do not provide all the guidance required by the informed Christian conscience. Therefore, a decision concerning abortion should be made only after thoughtful and prayerful consideration by the parties involved, with medical, family, pastoral, and other appropriate counsel.

2. 2024 Social Principles:
 - i. **K. Reproductive Health and Abortion**

We support the provision of comprehensive, age-appropriate education for sexual health, as well as access to consistent, effective, and affordable

contraception. We also affirm ministries and initiatives aimed at promoting reproductive health and enhancing the quality of life for women and girls. Because of the dangers and risks involved in childbearing, we believe that women and girls should have consistent access to gynecological care. We, therefore, urge governments, businesses, churches, and other civic institutions to make access to prevention education, medical check-ups, treatment, and counseling high priorities for women and girls of childbearing age.

Our commitment to the sanctity of human life makes us reluctant to condone abortion. We unconditionally reject it as an acceptable means of birth control or a mechanism for gender selection and other forms of eugenics. We support measures requiring parental, guardian, or other responsible adult notification and consent before abortions can be performed on girls who have not yet reached the age of legal adulthood, except in cases of alleged incest.

We oppose late-term or partial-birth abortion, a process also known as dilation and extraction. We call for the end to this practice, except when the life of the mother is in danger, no other medical treatments are feasible, or when severe abnormalities threaten the viability of the fetus. We recognize that these and other tragic conflicts of life with life may justify decisions to terminate the life of a fetus. In these limited circumstances, we support the legal option of abortion and insist that such procedures be performed by trained medical providers in clean and safe settings.

We urge all those considering abortions to seek appropriate medical advice and pastoral counseling and to engage in searching, prayerful inquiries into other alternatives, such as making babies available for adoption. We pray for those facing unintended pregnancies and offer our prayers and support as they attempt to discern God's will and seek God's wisdom and guidance. Regardless of the circumstances in which someone might get an abortion, we do not condone bullying or shaming people for their decisions or actions.

We acknowledge that young women of childbearing age frequently report that they lack the ability to make meaningful life choices or exercise effective control over their own lives. We challenge pastors, congregations, campus ministries, and others to be at the forefront of efforts to empower these young women. Additionally, we support resource centers that offer compassionate care and help women explore alternatives to abortion.

We recognize that access to reproductive health services is too often limited by economic factors. Women living in poverty are often unable to make choices about when to become pregnant or about the size of their families. They also lack access to safe prenatal and postnatal care. Such a lack of agency perpetuates cycles of poverty by restricting the ability of women to participate in the workforce and by increasing the strain on scarce family resources. We support policies and programs that extend reproductive health services to women in economically challenged areas.

We support the use of a variety of reproductive strategies for those desiring to have children, including fertility treatments, in vitro fertilization (IVF), embryo or sperm donation, surrogacy, and others. We believe the decision whether to use reproductive alternatives is best left to those considering the use of these options, in consultation with their health care providers. In all instances, the use of reproductive alternatives should be in keeping with the highest ethical standards, prioritizing the health and well-being of both women and children.

9. Apportionments

1667

EXHIBIT A

Exhibit A -Pie Chart of local church spending 2010-2022

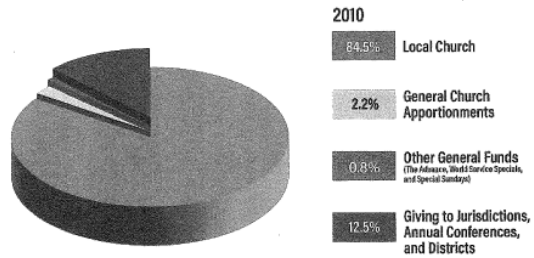
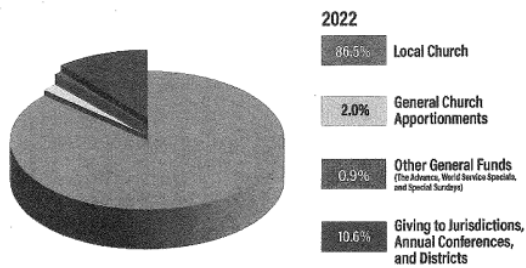
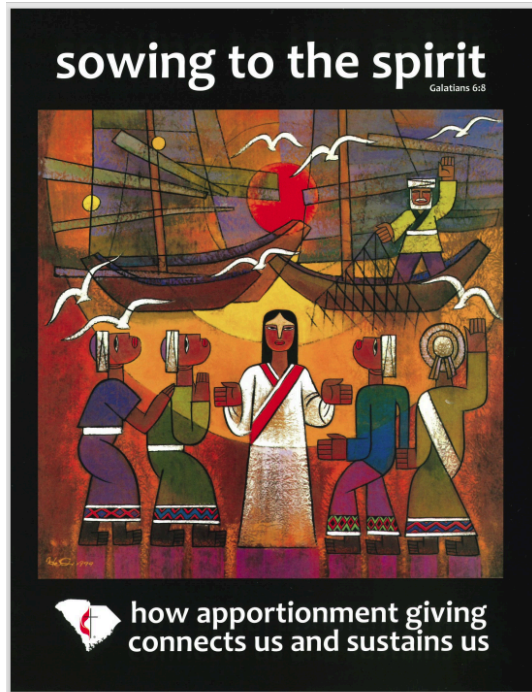


Exhibit A -Pie Chart of local church spending 2010-2022



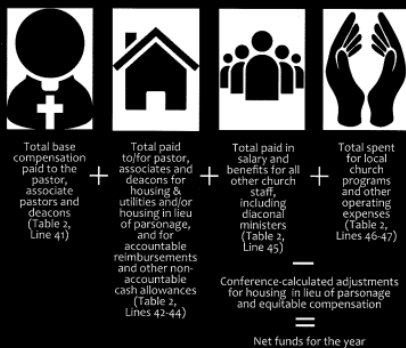
1.



2.

how apportionments are calculated

Apportionments are calculated from Statistical Table 2 for each church in the conference. These amounts are collected in January. We refer to the total of the selected lines as "Net Funds." They include:



Important points

- The placing of actual expenses on Table 2 is very important
- An expense should only be reported once on Table 2
- Church spending on capital additions/improvements, debt repayments, direct billing and missions does not factor into the apportionment calculation if reported on the correct lines
- Membership is not considered when calculating apportionments
- Once apportionments are set, they cannot be changed. Apportionments are set shortly before they are published.

HOW APPORTIONMENTS ARE CALCULATED

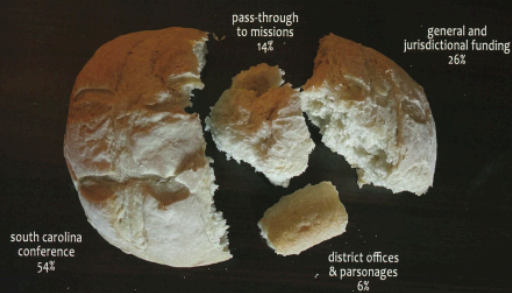
$$\frac{\text{My church's average net funds}}{\text{Sum of all churches' average net funds}} \times \text{Conference budget} = \text{My church's apportionment}$$

Once these are added for each church, we allocate apportionments based on a weighted two-year average. So the 2024 apportionment calculation will be calculated with an average based on the amounts reported in 2022 and 2021.

For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. — Galatians 6:8

3.

where our apportionments go



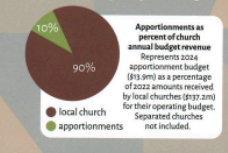
Here in the South Carolina Conference – at the local church, district and conference levels – we are constantly seeking a more excellent way to become better equipped for ministry in the midst of the changing realities of our culture.

We know that we can do so much more together as The United Methodist Church than we could ever do as individuals or congregations. When we consolidate our resources through apportionments, we share our gifts in a way that makes real what would otherwise be impossible.

Through this connective giving, we respond to disasters near and far. We support young people through United Methodist colleges, campus ministries and Africa University. We support the global Abundant Health initiative that seeks to impact the lives of children around the world so they might claim Jesus' promise of abundant life.

This kingdom-building work is why we pledge to support the church's ministry through our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. We commit ourselves to being the hands and feet of Jesus.

apportionment giving = tithing



We make disciples, train leaders, and create new places for new people. We address the needs of children and those who live in poverty.

It is good to remember that the point of our apportionment giving is never the money. It is about faithfully sharing in being a part of the Body of Christ – doing Christ's work.

For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. — Galatians 6:8

4.

connectional giving makes a difference

South Carolina Conference

Conference Benevolences
\$2,339,964 (2023) | \$2,083,451 (2024)
Nurture and outreach arm of our Annual Conference. Largest portion supports congregational specialists and the administration and programs of Connectional Ministries, as well as the Board of Ordained Ministry, Archives and History, Cabinet emergency fund, the South Carolina United Methodist Advocate and the Episcopal residence.

Retiree Health/Transition/Contingency
\$800,000 (2023) | \$300,000 (2024)
Provides subsidy for health insurance premiums for retired clergy, and grant funds for those in significant transitions, such as disability.

District Superintendent Compensation
\$1,292,176 (2023) | \$1,292,176 (2024)
Provides salary of \$107,681 for each of the 12 superintendents.

Equitable Compensation Fund
\$565,000 (2023) | \$365,000 (2024)
Helps pay salaries of pastors serving churches that are not able to meet the minimum standards set by the Annual Conference. Also provides primary support for new church start pastors.

Conference Pass-Through to Affiliates

Senior College Scholarships
\$950,000 (2023) | \$850,000 (2024)
Helps provide quality education in a Christian setting for students at Cuffin University and Columbia and Wofford colleges; 1/3 of total receipts goes to each institution.

Spartanburg Methodist College
\$588,018 (2023) | \$488,000 (2024)
Support fund for the college, providing academic programs, work study opportunities and programs for those with special academic needs.

Methodist Homes Resident Assistance
\$400,000 (2023) | \$375,000 (2024)
Supports residents of three retirement communities around the conference.

Camps & Retreat Ministries
\$319,800 (2023) | \$284,000 (2024)
Provides for the development, operations and maintenance of facilities operated by South Carolina Camps & Retreat Ministries across the conference.

General & Jurisdictional

World Service
\$2,176,172 (2023) | \$1,849,746 (2024)
Lifeline of our connection. Supports the programs, resources and materials of the general boards and agencies at home and around the world.

Episcopal Fund
\$644,453 (2023) | \$547,285 (2024)
Funds our share of support for all active and retired bishops (salary, housing, travel, pensions, office expenses).

General Conference Administration
\$328,403 (2023) | \$219,643 (2024)
Covers expenses of the General Conference, Judicial Council, other General Church administrative agencies.

Ministerial Education
\$755,000 (2023) | \$624,759 (2024)
75% of receipts support United Methodist seminaries and 25% remains in South Carolina for scholarships and grants to seminary students.

Interdenominational Cooperation Fund
\$57,483 (2023) | \$48,861 (2024)
Supports church activities in mission with other Christian communions (the World and National Councils of Churches and the Consultation on Church Union).

Black College Fund
\$293,169 (2023) | \$149,211 (2024)
Support for 10 historically black United Methodist colleges (including Claflin University) and one medical school in the United States.

Africa University Fund
\$65,614 (2023) | \$55,772 (2024)
Continues development of the United Methodist university in Zimbabwe.

Jurisdictional Mission/Ministry
\$39,328 (2023) | \$39,328 (2024)
Covers expenses of Jurisdictional Conference, missions, programs and administration of the SEJ.

What is connectional giving?
The main way United Methodists support the ministries of the church is through our apportioned funds, a method of giving that proportionally allocates the church-wide budget to conferences and local churches.

A PDF version of this publication can be downloaded at umcsc.org/treasurer.

5.

6. Belin's 2024 Apportionments = \$291,791 of \$3,442,683 (budget minus BCLC)

0	Accounts	Annual Budget 2024
7		
8	Expense Accounts	
9	Apportionments	
10	006600 - World Service	\$39,363.00
11	006601 - Episcopal Fund	\$11,657.00
12	006602 - Dist Supt Compensation	\$27,498.00
13	006603 - Pension & Insurance Admin	\$4,256.00
14	006604 - Equitable Compensation	\$7,767.00
15	006606 - Conference Benevolences	\$44,337.00
16	006607 - District Administration	\$15,893.00
17	006608 - District Parsonage/Office	\$10,882.00
18	006609 - Conference Administration	\$30,555.00
19	006610 - General Conf Admin	\$4,674.00
20	006618 - Jurisdictional Mission	\$624.00
21	006620 - Senior College Scholarships	\$18,088.00
22	006621 - Spartanburg Meth College	\$10,385.00
23	006622 - Campus Ministry	\$12,768.00
24	006624 - Methodist Home Support	\$7,980.00
25	006625 - Camps/Retreat Ministry	\$6,044.00
26	006632 - Ministerial Education	\$13,295.00
27	006635 - Congregational Development	\$18,195.00
28	006637 - Interdenominational Coop	\$1,040.00
29	006642 - Black College Fund	\$5,303.00
30	006656 - Africa University Fund	\$1,187.00
31	Total Apportionments	\$291,791.00
32	Total Expense Accounts	\$291,791.00

i.

10. Appointments

1. 2016 BOD:

2. ¶ 425. Responsibility-1. 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. Appointments are to be made with consideration of the gifts and evidence of God's grace of those appointed, to the needs, characteristics, and opportunities of congregations and institutions, and with faithfulness to the commitment to an open itineracy. Open itineracy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age, except for the provisions of mandatory retirement. Annual conferences shall, in their training of staff-parish relations committees, emphasize the open nature of itineracy and prepare congregations to receive the gifts and graces of appointed clergy without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age. The concept of itineracy is important, and sensitive attention should be given in appointing clergy with physical challenges to responsibilities and duties that meet their gifts and graces. Through appointment-making, the connectional nature of the United Methodist system is made visible.¹⁶

Appointment-making across conference lines shall be encouraged as a way of creating mobility and open itineracy. The jurisdictional committee on ordained ministry will cooperate with bishops and cabinets in providing information on supply and demand within the jurisdiction.

2. The United Methodist Church promotes and holds in high esteem the opportunity of an inclusive church (¶ 4. Article IV) with the formation of open itineracy (¶ 425.1).

3. 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. When such appointments are made, bishops, cabinets, and boards of ordained ministry shall provide specific training for the clergypersons so appointed and for their congregations.

3. 2024 Change (first paragraph only):

- i. Amend ¶ 425.1
- ii. Responsibility—1. 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. Appointments are to be made with consideration of the gifts and evidence of God's grace of those appointed, to the needs, characteristics,

and opportunities of congregations and institutions, and with faithfulness to the commitment to an open itineracy. Open itineracy means appointments are made without regard to race, ethnicity ~~origin~~, gender, color, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or age, except for the provisions of mandatory retirement. Annual conferences shall, in their training of staff-parish relations committees, emphasize the open nature of itineracy and prepare congregations to receive the gifts and graces of appointed clergy without regard to race, ethnicity ~~origin~~, gender, color, disability, marital status, economic condition, sexual orientation, or age. The concept of itineracy is important, and sensitive attention should be given in appointing clergy with physical challenges to responsibilities and duties that meet their gifts and graces. Through appointment-making, the connectional nature of the United Methodist system is made visible.

4. Appointment-making/consultation paragraph (no changes from 2016):
 - i. ¶ 427. Criteria—Appointments shall 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 district superintendent shall develop with the pastor and the committees on pastor-parish relations of all churches profiles that reflect the needs, characteristics, and opportunities for mission of the charge consistent with the Church’s statement of purpose. These profiles shall be reviewed annually and updated when appropriate to include:

- a) The general situation in which a congregation finds itself in a particular setting: size, financial condition, quality of lay leadership, special needs for pastoral ministry, and history.
- b) The convictional stance of the congregation: theology; prejudices, if any; spiritual life.
- c) The ministry of the congregation among its people for the sake of the community: service programs, basis for adding new members, reasons for losing members, mission to community and world, forms of witness.
- d) The qualities and functions of pastoral ministry needed to fulfill the mission, goals, and special needs of the congregation.

11. Denomination Budget

1. 2016-20 General Conference Budget: \$604 million (\$151 million/year)
2. 2024-28 General Conference Budget: \$373.4 million (\$93.35 million/year)
 - i. Contingent on collection rates being at 90% or more for the next two years
 - ii. If giving is below 90%, the budget bottom line the budget will be \$353.6 million.
3. Reduction of US bishops
 - i. 32 in US (down from 39 serving and 46 in 2016 budget)
 1. 9 in SEJ (down from 13)

12. Paragraph 2553

1. Petition 21087-CO-¶2553 Remove Disaffiliation Agreement adopted

13. Paragraph 2549

1. Petition 21058-LC-¶2549.2b Expanding Authority for Closing or Discontinuing Local Churches

¶2549.2.b) Upon a recommendation by the district superintendent, and with the consent of the presiding bishop, a majority of the district superintendents, and the appropriate district board of church location and building, the annual conference may declare a local church closed. In the alternative, the annual conference may declare a local church closed in response to a petition submitted jointly by the local church's Church Council, appointed or assigned Pastor in Charge, and at least one of its lay members of the annual conference. If the annual conference closes a local church, title to all the real and personal, tangible and intangible property of the local church shall immediately vest in the annual conference board of trustees, who shall hold said property in trust for the benefit of the annual conference.

14. Parts 1-5 of the Book of Discipline unadaptable

1. The Constitution
2. General Book of Discipline
3. Doctrinal Standards and Theological Task
4. The Ministry of All Christians
5. The Social Principles

15. Part 6 (Organization and Administration) is adaptable by region

1. The Local Church
2. The Ministry of the Ordained
3. The Superintendency
4. The Conferences
5. Administrative Order
6. Church Property
7. Judicial Administration

16. Regionalization

1. Petition 21043-CO-¶507 - **Worldwide Regionalization**, Petition #5 of 8 – The Creation of the U.S. Regional Committee

ADD New paragraph between existing ¶¶ 506 and 507 and renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly:

[NEW ¶ 507.] United States Regional Committee—1. There shall be a United States Regional Committee (“the Committee”) composed of all General Conference delegates representing annual conferences in the United States which shall have legislative function. In addition, one lay and one clergy from General Conference delegates of each of the central conferences (“central conferences” would change to “regional conferences outside the USA” upon ratification of constitutional amendments) shall be elected by the regional conferences outside the USA or their leadership bodies and shall serve with voice and vote. This Committee shall be assigned all petitions pertaining to the operation, governance, witness, and ministry of The United Methodist Church in the United States and which are adaptable by regional conferences according to ¶ 31.5 and ¶ 101 and per

¶ 543.7 (referred to hereafter as U.S. Region – Adaptable). The Committee shall operate in accordance with provisions enacted by the General Conference and the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order of the General Conference, as amended, to provide for the work of this Committee.

2. The provisions pertaining to the Committee shall be in effect until a United States Regional Conference has been created and is functional, at which time the Committee and these provisions will expire.

3. The Committee shall convene and process the legislation assigned to it immediately prior to the opening of the General Conference.

4. Actions of the Committee will be reported to the General Conference for vote of the General Conference, in accordance with procedures for legislation coming from the Committee.

This legislation shall take effect immediately after the adjournment of the postponed 2020 General Conference.

2. Petition 21045-CO-NonDis-I - Worldwide Regionalization, Petition #7 of 8 – A Non-Disciplinary Petition to Create a Plan for Organization of a United States Regional Conference

A Non-Disciplinary Petition to Create a Plan for Organization of a United States Regional Conference

Authorization - There shall be an Interim Committee on Organization for one quadrennium that organizes and plans for the establishment and functioning of a new United States Regional Conference comprising the five jurisdictions of the United States.

Composition - The Council of Bishops, through the Leadership Discernment Committee, shall appoint a 20-25-member Interim Committee on Organization. The committee membership shall be determined using proportionate representation of the United States jurisdictions, with a minimum of three members from each United States jurisdiction, ensuring broad diversity, including racial, young adults, persons with disabilities (special needs) and gender inclusion. All members of the Interim Committee on Organization shall be chosen from among the voting delegates elected by the annual conferences in the United States jurisdictions. Meeting and other necessary costs shall be funded by the General Administration Fund. In addition, three regional conference members shall be elected by the regional conferences outside the USA or their leadership bodies to advise and consult the Interim Committee on Organization.

Responsibilities - The Interim Committee on Organization shall be charged with the following responsibilities:

1. The Interim Committee on Organization shall choose the time and place for the convening of the initial gathering of the United States Regional Conference.

2. The Interim Committee on Organization shall work with the Secretary of the General Conference and the Business Manager of the General Conference in planning for the first gathering of the United States Regional Conference.

3. The Interim Committee on Organization, in consultation with the appropriate committees of the Commission on the General Conference, shall recommend to the United States Regional Conference for action at its first gathering what committees and officers are required to ensure the functionality of the United States Regional Conference.

4. Upon the completion of the first United States Regional Conference gathering, the Interim Committee on Organization shall cease to exist as a committee of the General Conference, unless the United States Regional Committee authorizes the continuation of their work for a specific time and purpose.

This petition will go into effect only upon the General Conference approval of the establishment of the United States Regional Conference.

APPENDIX

Anticipated Financial Requirements—United States Regional Conference

The creation of the United States Regional Conference is predicted to decrease the cost of General Conference by reducing the number days of the gathering, due to a decrease in number of days for the entire General Conference and the expectation that the United States Regional Conference would save money for the denomination. The United States Regional Conference could convene promptly at the end of General Conference or in conjunction with Jurisdictional conferences and meet for not more than a few days to handle the United States specific matters.

The Interim Committee on Organization for the United States Regional Conference would meet a total of two times during the quadrennium, each time for no more than three days (two nights lodging). The committee could meet in a central United States location and perhaps could receive donated meeting space from a church or an agency. At a maximum number of 25 members with flights, meals, lodging, staffing, and venue costs meeting two times, the committee would need new funding of between \$83,000 and \$98,000. The committee would only meet for one quadrennium and not beyond.

17. African Delegation

1. 775 of 862 delegates seated
 - i. 487 or 492 US delegates
 - ii. 278 of 370 central conference delegates (75% seated)
2. Credentialing report:
 - i. Some African Annual Conferences submitted wrong numbers of names or no names
 - ii. Some gave conflicting reports
 - iii. The Credentialing Committee used Conference Journals when possible to attempt to create accurate lists
 - iv. Fraudulent letters were sent to non-credentialed persons complicating the visa certification process
 - v. Couldn't issue too early because of visa expiration dates