

RESOLUTION # 2016 - 20 (Adjourned Session)
RESOLUTION TO 2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION
Resolution Establishing an Ad-Hoc Study Committee to Evaluate Alternative Fair Voting Methods for Electing Members to Committees and Delegations

Presented by Arch Street United Methodist Church

WHEREAS, The Constitution of The United Methodist Church calls for a “fair and open process” to elect members to serve on annual conference boards and commissions and for electing delegates to general conference (¶ 13. Article 1.2) but does not specify the method of election; and

WHEREAS, many elections at the annual conference level require numerous rounds of voting when nominees for an office or seat do not receive enough votes required to fill the seat – especially when electing general conference delegates – limiting the time available for the Body to discern important matters of faith and practice; and

WHEREAS, ranked choice voting ensures all participants have equal voice in electing one or more members to serve the Church by giving voting members the ability to rank candidates in order of preference; and

WHEREAS, ranked choice voting (also known as “preferential voting”) is the recommend voting method for Robert’s Rules of Order, and Robert’s Rules concludes that “It makes possible a more representative result than under a rule that a plurality shall elect.” (Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised In Chapter XIII §45. 11th edition, 2011, p. 425-28); and

WHEREAS, ranked choice voting has been used since the late 1800s and votes can be counted by hand or using modern voting technology; and

WHEREAS, ranked choice voting is a process of ranking nominees in order of preference (first choice, second choice, third choice, and so on). All first choices are counted, and nominees with the fewest votes are eliminated. If a voter member’s first choice is eliminated, their vote instantly goes to their next choice. Receiving a majority of votes elects nominees for a single position and nominees for multiple positions (like a conference board or delegation) are elected based on a determined threshold in proportion to the number of votes as determined by the Droop quota. (See “Droop Quota” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Droop_quota); and

WHEREAS, ranked ballots have been used for elections by organizations and in communities across the United States and around the world (including Portland, Maine,

Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Australian House of Representatives, and the Republic of Ireland to elect its president) to ensure fair results that are representative of the voting body; (See “Where Ranked Choice Voting Is Used”

<http://www.fairvote.org/reforms/instant-runoff-voting/where-rcv-is-used->);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference shall establish an ad-hoc committee that includes the input of the Bishop, Conference Secretary, and Election Judge along with conference members knowledgeable about different voting methods to study alternative voting methods for electing nominees when there are more than two nominees for a conference board position or when electing a delegation.

Person Responsible for Presenting the Resolution: Michelle C. Whittaker