

1 **RESOLUTION 2016 - 05 (Adjourned Session)**
2 **Resolution Concerning a Comprehensive Funding Plan for Benefit Obligations**
3 **Presented by Board of Pension and Health Benefits**
4

5 **WHEREAS**, Paragraph 1506.8 of the 2012 *Book of Discipline* requires that each Annual
6 Conference shall develop, adopt and implement a formal funding plan for funding all of
7 its benefit obligations;

8
9 **WHEREAS**, Paragraph 1506.8 of the 2012 *Book of Discipline* further states that the
10 funding plan shall:

- 11 1. Address the funding for liabilities;
 - 12 2. Be approved annually by the Annual Conference, following receipt and
13 inclusion of a favorable opinion from the General Board of Pension and Health
14 Benefits; and
 - 15 3. Meet the minimum standards established by the General Board of Pension and
16 Health Benefits for all benefit liabilities;
- 17

18 **WHEREAS**, The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits has developed a
19 spreadsheet template with which all Annual Conferences are to develop and submit their
20 funding plans in a uniform format;

21
22 **WHEREAS**, The Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference staff and the Conference
23 Board of Pension and Health Benefits have developed the Comprehensive Funding Plan
24 for 2017, a summary of which is attached as Exhibit A (the detailed plan is available on
25 the conference website and is included in the Conference Board of Pension and Health
26 Benefits annual report);

27
28 **WHEREAS**, Exhibit A has been submitted to the General Board of Pension and Health
29 Benefits for review and a favorable opinion has been issued; a copy of which is included
30 as Exhibit B;

31
32 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference adopt
33 Exhibit A as its Comprehensive Funding Plan for 2017.
34

35 **Person responsible for presenting resolution:** Barry Rose
36

37 **Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference**
38 **2017 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan Summary**
39

40 **INTRODUCTION**

41 The 2012 *Book of Discipline* ¶ 1506.6 requires that each annual conference develops,
42 adopt and implement a formal comprehensive funding plan for funding all of its benefit
43 obligations. The funding plan shall be submitted annually to Wespath Benefits and
44 Investments (Wespath) for review and be approved annually by the annual conference,
45 following the receipt and inclusion of a favorable written opinion from Wespath. This

46 document is only a summary of the information contained in the actual signed funding
47 plan and does not contain all the information required for a comprehensive view of the
48 conference's benefit obligations. You may request the full contents of the 2017
49 comprehensive benefit funding plan from your conference benefit office.

50

51 **CLERGY RETIREMENT SECURITY PROGRAM (CRSP)**

52 **Defined Benefit (DB) and Defined Contribution (DC)**

53

54 **Program overview:**

55 The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is an Internal Revenue Code section
56 403(b) retirement program providing lifetime income and account flexibility designed for
57 those who serve as clergy of The United Methodist Church. The program is designed to
58 provide participants with one portion of their overall retirement benefits. CRSP replaced
59 the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) effective January 1, 2007, which had previously
60 replaced the Pre-82 Plan for service rendered before January 1, 1982. CRSP consists
61 of both a defined benefit (DB) plan, which provides a monthly benefit at retirement
62 based on years of credited service to The United Methodist Church and a defined
63 contribution (DC) plan, which provides a retirement account balance established and
64 funded by the annual conferences.

65

66 **Current funding plan information:**

67 The Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP-DB) annuities' total liability as of
68 January 1, 2015 is \$1.271 billion, while total plan assets are \$1.407 billion, resulting in a
69 current plan funded ratio of 111%. The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference portion of the
70 liability is 1.6014% with a 2017 contribution of \$1,530,733. The conference anticipates
71 that the amount will be funded by Direct Billing - representing year over year in how
72 contributions are to be funded. Additionally, General Conference 2012 approved a
73 change to CRSP that provides each annual conference the discretion to determine
74 whether to cover three-quarter and half-time clergy. The Eastern Pennsylvania
75 Conference has elected to cover clergy serving 50%+ under CRSP effective January 1,
76 2017.

77

78 Effective January 1, 2014, the CRSP-DC plan was reduced from a 3% to a 2% of plan
79 compensation non-matching contribution. Clergy have the opportunity to earn up to an
80 additional 1% CRSP-DC contribution by contributing at least 1% of their plan
81 compensation to UMPIP; therefore, if a participant contributes at least 1% of plan
82 compensation to UMPIP, the individual will receive a contribution of 3%, which is
83 unchanged from 2013. The 2017 CRSP-DC contribution is anticipated to be \$370,000
84 and will be funded by this will be billed to local churches – representing year over year
85 in how contributions are to be funded.

86

87 **MINISTERIAL PENSION PLAN (MPP)**

88

89 **Plan overview:**

90 Supplement Three to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as
91 the Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP), provides clergy with a pension benefit for their

92 years of ministry with The United Methodist Church from 1982 through 2006. MPP is an
93 Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement plan. Effective January 1, 2014,
94 exactly 65% of the account balance must be annuitized when the funds are to be
95 distributed. The remainder may be rolled over to UMPIP, into an IRA or another
96 qualified plan, or it may be paid out as a lump sum.

97

98 **Current funding plan information:**

99 The Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) annuities' total liability as of January 1, 2015, is
100 \$3.122 billion, while total plan assets are \$3.509 billion, resulting in a current plan
101 funded ratio of 112% and no required contribution for 2017. The Eastern Pennsylvania
102 Conference's portion of the total liability is 1.6606%. Future MPP annuitants have a total
103 account balance of \$4.145 billion, and the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference's portion
104 of that balance is \$69,391,467 or 1.67% of the total.

105

106 **PRE-1982 PLAN**

107 **Plan overview:**

108 Supplement One to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), also known as the
109 Pre-1982 Plan, provides clergy with a pension benefit for their years of ministry with The
110 United Methodist Church before 1982. The Pre-1982 Plan was replaced by MPP
111 effective January 1, 1982. If a clergy person retires within the Conference (and does not
112 terminate), the minimum benefit payable is based on two factors: 1) years of service
113 with pension credit and 2) the Conference pension rate. Years of service with pension
114 credit are approved by each Conference on the recommendation of the Conference
115 Board of Pensions (CBOP) in accordance with plan provisions and the *Book of*
116 *Discipline*. The pension rate also called the Past Service Rate (PSR), is the dollar
117 amount chosen by the Conference as the amount payable for each approved year of
118 service with pension credit. The pension rate may change from year to year. The
119 number of years of service with pension credit is multiplied by the pension rate, and the
120 product is the minimum annual benefit payable to those clergy eligible for Pre-1982 Plan
121 benefits. In certain situations, the benefit received from the Pre-1982 plan may vary
122 based on the applicability of what is referred to as Defined Benefit Service Money
123 (DBSM), which is the defined contribution feature of the Pre-1982 Plan. At the time that
124 a participant retires, the DBSM account is converted to a life-based benefit and, at that
125 point, the clergy's benefit is the greater of the PSR or DBSM benefit. If the conference
126 increases the PSR, the clergy's benefit is recalculated; but the DBSM based benefit
127 does not change.

128

129 **Current funding plan information:**

130 The 2017 PSR recommended to the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference will be \$502.00,
131 representing a 0% increase from the 2016 rate. The conference expects future
132 increases to be approximately 0%, which is based on the following rationale: The
133 conference is investigating the use of a grant system rather than increasing the PSR.
134 The contingent annuitant percentage is recommended to remain at the 70% level.
135 Based on the final actuarial valuations from Wespas as of January 1, 2015 for 2017,
136 the portion of the Pre-1982 liability and assets attributable to the Eastern Pennsylvania
137 Conference and its related funded status are as follows:

Funding Plan Liability	\$(24,936,228)
Assets, including In-Plan and Outside	<u>24,403,900</u>
Funded Status	\$(532,328)
Funded Ratio	97.87%

138 **ACTIVE HEALTH BENEFIT PROGRAM**

139 **Program Overview:**

140 The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference offers the following active health benefit to its
 141 eligible active participants: Insured.

142

143 **Current funding plan information:**

144 The total cost of the program for 2017 is anticipated to be \$4,376,032 and will be funded
 145 by Composite rate billed to local churches. It is anticipated that increases for future
 146 years will average 5.0% based on the following rationale: We changed the process for
 147 the collection of premiums in 2016. The local church now pays a lesser composite rate,
 148 and the participant pays the remainder due for coverage.

149 • ***Additional Conference Sponsored Coverage***

150 The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference has elected to provide health benefits
 151 coverage to the following groups during periods where without conference
 152 funded premiums the participants would not be provided coverage or benefits (all
 153 figures as of 12/31/2015):

Category	Number of Participants	Estimated Cost
1. Clergy and/or lay participants on disability	9	\$281,880
2. Surviving spouses and children of deceased clergy and lay participants	2	\$13,409
3. Clergy in the Voluntary Transition Program	1	\$6,498

154 The total estimated cost of conference sponsored coverage as of 12/31/2015 is
 155 \$301,787.

156

157 **POST-RETIREMENT MEDICAL BENEFIT PROGRAM (PRM)**

158 **Program Overview:**

159 The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference post-retirement medical program currently offers
 160 a Stipend.

161

162 **Current funding plan information:**

163 The conference's expectation for 2017 is to offer the following benefits: Retiree health
 164 is outsourced and a stipend, based on retirement date and years of service has been
 165 put in place as of 1/1/15.

166
167 The funding obligation for 2017 is anticipated to be \$891,651 with the following funding
168 sources: Account assets and new incoming askings. On a longer term basis, the
169 conference intends to ensure funding by a combination of apportioned, pre-funded and
170 clergy contribution.

171
172 Based on the most recent PRM valuation dated 12/31/2015, the following is the funded
173 position of the post-retirement medical benefits:

1. Expected Post Retirement Obligation (EPBO) or net conference cost	Not available
2. Accumulated Post Retirement Obligation (APBO) or net conference cost	\$13,014,983
3. Assets designated for PRM	\$994,028
4. Service Cost (SC) or net conference cost	\$18,933

174 As a preview of the 2018 CBFP requirement, a new PRM Funding Contribution
175 requirement will be mandatory for conferences requesting a full favorable CBFP
176 opinion. This year the calculation for informational purposes only is as follows:

5. Funded Status [3. – 2.]	\$(12,020,955)
6. Number of Annual Payments	20
7. Portion of Funded Status Payable [5. / 6., but zero if 5. is positive]	\$601,048
8. PRM Funding Contribution, Informational purposes only [4. + 7.]	\$619,981

177 These values are based on a 4.0% long-term discount rate and a 0% long-term
178 expected rate of return on assets.

179
180 **COMPREHENSIVE PROTECTION PLAN (CPP)**

181
182 **Plan Overview:**

183 The Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) provides death, long-term disability and
184 other welfare benefits for eligible clergy of The United Methodist Church and their
185 families. It is an Internal Revenue Code 414(e) "church plan" funded by plan sponsor
186 insurance premiums. Generally, clergy are eligible to participate in CPP if the
187 conference or salary-paying unit sponsors the plan, and they can satisfy the eligibility
188 requirements which include full-time appointment with plan compensation equal to or
189 greater than 60% of the Denominational Average Compensation (DAC) or the
190 Conference Average Compensation (CAC), whichever is less.

191
192 **Current funding plan information:**

193 For 2017, the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference has an expected required contribution
194 to the Comprehensive Protection Plan of \$500,000, which is anticipated to be funded by
195 Apportionments. The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be 0%

196 per year as a result of a trend down in FTE appointments.

197

198 **UNITED METHODIST PERSONAL INVESTMENT PLAN (UMPIP) FOR LAY AND**
199 **CLERGY**

200

201 **Plan Overview:**

202 The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) is an Internal Revenue Code
203 section 403(b) defined contribution retirement savings plan for clergy and lay employees
204 of The United Methodist Church and affiliated organizations. Participants may make
205 before-tax, Roth, and after-tax contributions through payroll deductions. Participant
206 contributions, various optional plan sponsor contributions and investment earnings
207 comprise the individual's retirement account balance.

208

209 **Current funding plan information:**

210 Conference office lay employees working an average of 21 hours per week or more are
211 eligible for a plan sponsor funded pension contribution of 11% of salary matching the
212 participant contribution of 3%. Lay employees are encouraged to make contributions
213 toward their retirement through payroll deductions to the UMPIP. The estimated
214 contribution for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference is anticipated to be \$181,600 and
215 will be funded via apportionments to local churches.

216

217 **OTHER CONFERENCE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS: DEFINED CONTRIBUTION (DC)**
218 **TYPE**

219

220 **Plan Overview:** The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference currently offers the following
221 DC benefit(s): Basic Life \$10,000. The funding obligation for 2017 is anticipated to be
222 \$14,676 with the funding sources to be paid through apportionment to local churches.
223 The anticipated average increase in future years is expected to be 0% per year due to
224 the closure of our account with The Standard and move of our book of business to
225 Hartford with a huge decrease in premium.

226

227 **CONCLUSION**

228 The 2017 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan and the above Summary document
229 incorporates, to the best of our understanding, the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference's
230 obligations and funding requirements of the benefits provided to the clergy and laity of
231 the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.

Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference

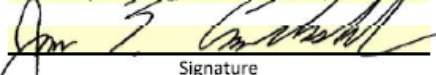
This funding plan incorporates, to the best of our understanding, the conference's obligations and funding of the benefits provided to clergy and laity, as noted below.

It is understood by the signees that defined benefit plan liabilities (Pre-82, MPP and CRSP-DB) continue until the last benefit is paid to participants and their surviving spouses irrespective of the funding level of the plan. That is, even if the assets in the plan are larger than the liabilities in the plan, the conference still has a liability (obligation) and potential future contribution due to the plan.

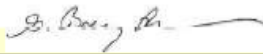
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CRSP DB and DC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER DC: Basic Life \$10,	<input type="checkbox"/> Other DB Obligation - A
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MPP	<input type="checkbox"/> Other DC Obligation - B	<input type="checkbox"/> Other DB Obligation - B
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pre-1982	<input type="checkbox"/> Other DC Obligation - C	<input type="checkbox"/> Other DB Obligation - C
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRM	<input type="checkbox"/> Other DC Obligation - D	<input type="checkbox"/> Other DB Obligation - D
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Active Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Other DC Obligation - E	<input type="checkbox"/> Other DB Obligation - E
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CPP		
<input type="checkbox"/> UMPIP Clergy		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UMPIP Lay		


Signature

Nancylo Fielding, Executive Director, 6.29.16


Signature

James Cruickshank, Treasurer, 6.29.16


Signature

Barry Rose, President EPABOPHB, 6.29.16


Signature

Kip Craven, Chair EPA CFA, 6.29.16

Signatures are required from the Conference Benefit Officer (or equivalent), Conference Board of Pension Chair and Conference Treasurer. Signatures are recommended from Council on Finance and Administration Chair and/or other conference leaders as deemed appropriate.



Opinion on Eastern Pennsylvania 2017 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan

This Funding Plan meets the standards for a Pre-82 funding plan as established by Wespath, and the requirements for a favorable opinion of a Funding Plan.

Note: The statement above and any written opinion provided by Wespath do not imply any representation as to the ability or probability of the applicable Conference to fulfill the obligations included in the Funding Plan.

Wespath Benefits and Investments

Wespath Benefits and Investments

Glenview, Illinois
August 19, 2016

1 **RESOLUTION #2016 - 22 (Adjourned Session)**
2 **RESOLUTION TO 2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION**
3 **Resolution Relating to the Redistricting of the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual**
4 **Conference**
5 **Presented by the Cabinet**
6

7 **WHEREAS**, the Eastern PA Cabinet and Bishop Johnson have prayerfully considered
8 the current demographic and financial condition of the annual conference, have solicited
9 and received feedback from numerous annual conference agencies, boards, committees
10 and organizations, and held six district town halls (April 4 - SE, April 5 - Central, April 19
11 - East, April 25 - Southwest and April 27 - Northeast) and had further discussion at the
12 June session of Annual Conference and recommend a district reduction from six to four;
13

14 **WHEREAS**, on September 1, 2016, the Conference Council of Finance and
15 Administration (CCFA) reviewed the financial implications of having six versus four
16 districts for the annual conference and the billing implications for local churches and
17 unanimously voted to support the Resolution and plan of the Conference to Re-District
18 from 6 districts to 4 districts;
19

20 **WHEREAS**, the Board of Trustees reviewed the financial implications of having six versus
21 four districts for the annual conference and the billing implications for local churches and
22 approved the Resolution and plan of the Conference to Re-District from 6 districts to 4
23 districts;
24

25 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Eastern PA Annual Conference
26 be redistricted from 6 districts to 4 districts effective July 1, 2017.
27

28 **Persons responsible for presenting the resolution:** Dr. Anita Powell, Dean of the
29 Cabinet; Ms. Irene Dickinson, Chairperson of CCFA, Mr. Bill Thresher; Chairperson of
30 Board of Trustees.

2017 Connectional Ministries Budget - Recommendations

4 Districts

1. That the 2017 Connectional Ministries (CMF) Budget for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference be set and adopted as follows: Church Giving to CMF is set at \$3,200,000; total expenses for CMF are \$3,107,996. That the budget excess of \$92,004 will be directed to meet the financial obligations of the Conference, including the Pre-82 Pension Liability according to Resolution 2012-21.
2. The GCFA 2017 budget for World Service is set at \$1,215,025; the GCFA 2017 budget request for General Church is set at \$1,146,967.
3. Treasurers of local churches be encouraged to submit their Apportionments and Billed Funds to the Conference on a monthly basis and that, guided by the Spirit, our churches will strive to pay 2017 Apportionments and Billed Funds in full.
4. That automobile travel expense for official conference business for staff personnel shall be set at the approved IRS rate, by the Council on Finance and Administration in concurrence with the Commission on Equitable Compensation. That all clergy and lay volunteer members of Conference boards and agencies be reimbursed, if requested, at the rate of 14 cents per mile for travel to meetings.
5. That the Treasurer/Executive Director of Administrative Ministries close the books for 2016 on January 15, 2017, and observe that date as the last date on which he will receive final remittances for the year ending December 31, 2016.
6. That any agency of the Conference which determines to use its funds to employ a person either part-time or full-time for whom there would be an expectation of employment in a subsequent Conference year, be in consultation with the Conference Council on Finance and Administration six months prior to making any employment commitments. Be it further resolved that the same process be followed when any part-time position is upgraded to a more extensive position.
7. That the Conference Council on Finance and Administration continue to review, revise, and formulate policies, specific directives and recommendations concerning the overall financial structure, bookkeeping procedures and auditing requirements of all groups receiving funds from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.
8. That, in the case of an oversight of any essential item, the Council on Finance and Administration shall be authorized to make such adjustments as are necessary to the Annual Conference budget.
9. Reference 2012 *Book of Discipline*, ¶613.8. "That CCFA be authorized to create a process for transfer of funds within the budget."
10. That the Council on Finance and Administration be granted permission to borrow up to 10% of the apportionment budget in the event that funds do not meet budgeted amounts, or are not sufficient to cover the seasonal shortfall, or as necessary to support Conference agencies where there are strong legal and financial ties. (See 2012 *Book of Discipline*, ¶613.10)

- 46 11. That the Council on Finance and Administration “receive, consider, report, and
47 make recommendations to the Annual Conference regarding the following, prior
48 to final decision by the Annual Conference: (a) any proposal to raise capital
49 funds for any purpose; (b) funding considerations related to any proposal which
50 comes from the conference; (c) any requests to conduct a special conference-
51 wide financial appeal, whether by special collections, campaigns or otherwise,
52 in the local churches of the conference.” (See 2012 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 613.2)
53 That no Annual Conference agency or interest shall make a conference-wide
54 appeal to the local churches for funds without the approval of the Annual
55 Conference upon recommendation of the Council on Finance and
56 Administration except in case of an extreme emergency when such approval
57 may be given by a two-thirds vote of the district superintendents and of the
58 council acting jointly. (See 2012 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 614.5)
- 59 12. That all “apportionment and billed funds” are “temporarily restricted funds” to be
60 used only for the specific purposes designated.

2017 Connectional Ministries Budget - Recommendations

6 Districts

1. That the 2017 Connectional Ministries (CMF) Budget for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference be set and adopted as follows: Church Giving to CMF is set at \$3,200,000; total expenses for CMF are \$3,249,181. That the budget deficit of \$49,181 will be funded from Conference reserves.
2. The GCFA 2016 budget for World Service is set at \$1,215,025; the GCFA 2016 budget request for General Church is set at \$1,146,967.
3. Treasurers of local churches be encouraged to submit their Apportionments and Billed Funds to the Conference on a monthly basis and that, guided by the Spirit, our churches will strive to pay 2017 Apportionments and Billed Funds in full.
4. That automobile travel expense for official conference business for staff personnel shall be set at the approved IRS rate, by the Council on Finance and Administration in concurrence with the Commission on Equitable Compensation. That all clergy and lay volunteer members of Conference boards and agencies be reimbursed, if requested, at the rate of 14 cents per mile for travel to meetings.
5. That the Treasurer/Executive Director of Administrative Ministries close the books for 2016 on January 15, 2017, and observe that date as the last date on which he will receive final remittances for the year ending December 31, 2016.
6. That any agency of the Conference which determines to use its funds to employ a person either part-time or full-time for whom there would be an expectation of employment in a subsequent Conference year, be in consultation with the Conference Council on Finance and Administration six months prior to making any employment commitments. Be it further resolved that the same process be followed when any part-time position is upgraded to a more extensive position.
7. That the Conference Council on Finance and Administration continue to review, revise, and formulate policies, specific directives and recommendations concerning the overall financial structure, bookkeeping procedures and auditing requirements of all groups receiving funds from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.
8. That, in the case of an oversight of any essential item, the Council on Finance and Administration shall be authorized to make such adjustments as are necessary to the Annual Conference budget.
9. Reference 2012 *Book of Discipline*, ¶613.8. "That CCFA be authorized to create a process for transfer of funds within the budget."
10. That the Council on Finance and Administration be granted permission to borrow up to 10% of the apportionment budget in the event that funds do not meet budgeted amounts, or are not sufficient to cover the seasonal shortfall, or as necessary to support Conference agencies where there are strong legal and financial ties. (See 2012 *Book of Discipline*, ¶613.10)
11. That the Council on Finance and Administration "receive, consider, report, and make recommendations to the Annual Conference regarding the following, prior

46 to final decision by the Annual Conference: (a) any proposal to raise capital
47 funds for any purpose; (b) funding considerations related to any proposal which
48 comes from the conference; (c) any requests to conduct a special conference-
49 wide financial appeal, whether by special collections, campaigns or otherwise,
50 in the local churches of the conference.” (See 2012 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 613.2)
51 That no Annual Conference agency or interest shall make a conference-wide
52 appeal to the local churches for funds without the approval of the Annual
53 Conference upon recommendation of the Council on Finance and
54 Administration except in case of an extreme emergency when such approval
55 may be given by a two-thirds vote of the district superintendents and of the
56 council acting jointly. (See 2012 *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 614.5)
57 12. That all “apportionment and billed funds” are “temporarily restricted funds” to be
58 used only for the specific purposes designated.

1 **RESOLUTION # 2016- 09 (Revised for Adjourned Session)**
2 **RESOLUTION TO 2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION**
3 **Resolution Relating to Safe Sanctuaries Policy**
4 **Presented by the Safe Sanctuaries Committee**

5
6 **WHEREAS**, it is the responsibility of the annual conference and every local church to
7 take steps to protect the well-being of children, youth, and personnel who work with
8 them in the ministries of the church, as well as to comply with all laws of the
9 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and

10
11 **WHEREAS**, previous conference safe sanctuaries policies have quoted extensively
12 from the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law; and

13
14 **WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania periodically revises its child protective
15 services law; and

16
17 **WHEREAS**, this proposed new policy removes quotations from sections of the law and
18 instead requires that churches comply with law as it is force at any given time:

19
20 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference
21 adopt the following as its Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church
22 Policy, which replaces all previous policies.

23
24 **Person Responsible for Presenting Resolution:** Rev. James H. Wilkin

25
26 **SAFE SANCTUARIES**
27 **Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church Policy**
28 **June 2016**

29
30 **PREAMBLE**

31 God has called us to make our ministries safe, protecting our children from abuse and
32 exploitation. God has also called us to create communities of faith where children can
33 be safe and grow strong.

34
35 Jesus taught “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me,” (Mark
36 9:37 NRSV) and “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones...it
37 would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you
38 were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6 NRSV)

39
40 The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state “...children must be
41 protected from economic, physical, and sexual exploitation and abuse.” (Par. 162(D)
42 *2012 Book of Discipline*)

43
44 At each child’s baptism, we affirm our responsibility to their safety by our congregational
45 response, pledging:

46
47 “With God’s help, we will so order our lives after the example of Christ that this
48 child, surrounded by steadfast love, may be established in the faith, and
49 confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal.” (The Book of
50 Worship, Baptismal Covenant, Congregational Pledge II)
51

52 Building on these foundations, we recognize that our faith calls us to offer hospitality
53 and protection to all children, as well as those who are committed to ministering to them
54 as volunteers and employees. Every 15 seconds, a child is abused or neglected.
55 Often, abuse occurs in places where children feel safe – homes, schools, camps, and
56 even churches. In over three quarters of reported cases, the victim was related to or
57 acquainted with the abuser. In light of this, the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of
58 The United Methodist Church has seen fit to establish this policy that can help to 1)
59 prevent such abuse from happening in our churches; 2) make our churches places
60 where children can feel safer in disclosing abuse; and 3) protect the volunteers and
61 employees that minister to our children.
62

63 It is the policy of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference that every church in the
64 conference adopt a Safe Sanctuaries policy that conforms to the standards set forth in
65 this conference policy. It is the policy of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference that all
66 conference and district ministries with children comply with the standards set forth in
67 this policy.
68

69 Notwithstanding anything contained in this policy, it is the responsibility of every church
70 in the conference to ensure that it is in compliance with all aspects of the Pennsylvania
71 Child Protective Services Law (63 PA. C.S.A. 6301). In the event that the law conflicts
72 with this policy, the law shall control.
73

74 **SCREENING AND SELECTION OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS:**
75

76 **Screening Standards:**

77 All applicants for employment and/or volunteer service in which that applicant shall have
78 contact with children in a manner which, under Pennsylvania law currently in force and
79 as enacted and amended in the future from time to time, requires the person to obtain
80 background clearances shall complete the following prior to start of service:
81

- 82 1) Written Application –a written application that shall include at least the
83 following information:
 - 84 a. Name
 - 85 b. Address
 - 86 c. Phone Number
 - 87 d. Work/Volunteer History
 - 88 e. Experience and skills related to the position
 - 89 f. Two (2) personal, non-related references.
- 90 2) Background Checks –

- 91 a. All background checks required by the laws of the Commonwealth of
92 Pennsylvania currently in force and as enacted and amended from
93 time to time.
- 94 b. In addition to the above clearances, all employees and volunteers of
95 the EPA conference camps shall obtain all clearances required for
96 accreditation by the American Camp Association.
- 97 c. In addition to the above clearances, all employees and volunteers of
98 the preschool centers operated by an EPA church shall obtain all
99 clearances required for their certificate of compliance by the
100 Department of Education.
- 101 3) Acceptance of Notice Requirement – complete the acceptance of notice
102 requirement acknowledgment that they have been informed of and will
103 comply with Pennsylvania law that requires them to inform the church in
104 writing of any arrest, conviction or child abuse report that would prohibit them
105 from working with children.
- 106 4) References – at least two references from persons not related to the applicant
107 shall be obtained and contacted for all new applicants for employment or
108 volunteer service.
- 109 5) Relationship with Church – All prospective volunteer workers with children
110 shall have an active relationship with the local church for at least six months
111 before being allowed to be in a supervisory role in activities for children.
- 112 6) Records – All written records shall be confidential and shall be kept in a
113 secure location with access restricted on a need to know basis. All files shall
114 be maintained for three (3) years after service ends.

115
116 **TRAINING:**

117 All persons who have direct contact with children shall participate in training as required
118 under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania currently in force and as enacted
119 and amended in the future from time to time.

120
121 **SUPERVISION:**

122 Supervision procedures are designed to reduce the possibility of abuse or exploitation
123 of children, and to protect staff persons and volunteers from unfounded accusations.

124
125 **Supervision Standards:**

126 Programs and ministries in the church that are licensed or accredited by a licensing or
127 accreditation body, or that have formally adopted supervision procedures, and receive
128 pre-approval from the conference Board of Trustees shall follow their established
129 requirements for the supervision children.

130
131 EPA conference camps shall follow the supervision standards required for accreditation
132 by the American Camp Association.

133
134 All other programs and ministries of the church shall use the following standards for the
135 supervision of children.

136

- 137 1) The two adult rule – Regardless of the size group, there will always be at
138 least two adults present. This may include the presence of an adult ‘roamer’
139 who moves in and out of rooms/ministry activities.
- 140 2) No child will be left unsupervised while participating in a ministry
141 activity/event.
- 142 3) All ministry activities should occur in open view. Each room or space where
143 ministry activities/events occur must be open to public view. For example:
144 enclosed spaces such as classrooms shall have a viewing window, a glass
145 panel in the door, a ½ door configuration or an open door.
- 146 4) No person shall supervise an age group unless he/she is at least 18 years of
147 age or older and is at least 5 years older than the children being supervised.
- 148 5) Ministry events involving transportation shall require a written consent form
149 signed by the parent or guardian of the child.

151 **REPORTING:**

152 Reporting of any allegation of child abuse shall be done in accordance with the laws of
153 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania currently in force and as enacted and amended in
154 the future from time to time.

155
156 It is essential that all employees and volunteers who have contact with children in a
157 manner which, under Pennsylvania law currently in force and as enacted and amended
158 in the future define them as a mandated reporter have a legal responsibility under the
159 law to make a report directly to public child welfare officials any time they have
160 reasonable cause to suspect abuse has occurred. Failure to comply with this
161 requirement can lead to civil and/or criminal penalties for the employee or volunteer.

162
163 The District Superintendent shall be notified if the alleged perpetrator is a staff person or
164 volunteer of the church.

165
166 In the event that a member of the clergy becomes aware of suspected child abuse as a
167 result of confidential communication which is protected under 42 PA C.S. 5943 (relating
168 to confidential communications to clergymen), the conference legal counsel should
169 immediately be consulted.

171 **PASTORAL RESPONSES FOR REPORTS OF ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE:**

172 Any allegation of abuse requires a process to address responding to the victim, the
173 alleged perpetrator, and the press. The response must be quick, compassionate and
174 unified. All allegations will be taken seriously.

175
176 Pastoral response is NOT an investigation of the alleged abuse. The investigation is the
177 responsibility of public officials (child welfare and/or law enforcement). In all cases of
178 reported abuse, there shall be cooperation with all official investigating agencies.

180 **Response to victims of abuse:**

181 In the instance of any allegation of abuse, there shall be a reaching out to the victim and
182 the victim’s family. Pastoral resources shall be extended, and the conference I-Care

183 Team can be contacted to assist in providing this service. The care and safety of the
184 victim shall be considered the first priority. Response to the victim and the victim's
185 family shall be done in a positive and supportive manner.
186

187 The parents of the victim shall be notified and steps shall be taken to address the safety
188 and well being of the child until the parent(s) arrive. **NOTE:** If one or both of the
189 parents is the alleged abuser, the direction of the child welfare authorities shall be
190 followed concerning notification of others.
191

192 **Response to all alleged perpetrators of abuse:**

193 In the instance of an allegations of abuse there shall be a reaching out to the alleged
194 perpetrator and the perpetrator's family. Pastoral resources shall be extended and the
195 conference I-Care Team can be contacted to assist in providing this service. Response
196 to the alleged perpetrator and the perpetrator's family shall be done in a supportive way.
197

198 The alleged perpetrator shall immediately, yet with dignity and respect for their sacred
199 worth, be removed from further involvement with children and advised that there has
200 been an allegation of abuse. Details of the allegations of the abuse shall not be
201 discussed with the alleged perpetrator at the time of removal. In any removal of a staff
202 member or volunteer from any activity/ministry, care shall be taken to handle the
203 removal in a discreet manner.
204

205 When it has been alleged that a member of the church staff or a volunteer, has
206 committed an act of abuse, the staff member or volunteer shall be required to refrain
207 from all ministry activities/events with children until the incident has been fully resolved
208 by the appropriate state authorities and/or in accordance with the Book of Discipline.
209 At that time, a meeting shall be held with the employee or volunteer to discuss the
210 incident(s) that led to the report being made. Even if the public agency determines the
211 report to be unfounded, the church has the right to prohibit the volunteer or employee
212 from resuming working in ministries with children based on the facts and circumstances
213 available at that time.
214

215 **Response to the Media:**

216 In consultation with the presiding bishop, the District Superintendent, the Conference
217 Director of Communications and pastor shall decide on a single spokesperson for
218 contact with the public/media. All media requests for statements shall be directed to
219 that spokesperson.
220

221 **Compliance:** Compliance with this policy shall be a matter of record at each annual
222 Charge Conference.

1 **RESOLUTION # 2016 -10 (Revised for Adjourned Session)**
2 **RESOLUTION TO 2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION**
3 **Resolution Relating to Computer Network and Internet Access Policy**
4 **Presented by the Communications Ministry Team and the Safe Sanctuaries**
5 **Committee**

6
7 **WHEREAS**, computers, computer networks and other electronic devices provide
8 employees and church members access to the vast information resources of the
9 Internet with the intention of increasing productivity and enhancing church-related
10 communication; and

11
12 **WHEREAS**, there is also justifiable concern that they can be misused, potentially
13 violating laws, ordinances or other church policies, garnering negative publicity for the
14 church and potentially exposing it to significant legal liabilities:

15
16 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that all local churches in the Eastern Pennsylvania
17 Annual Conference require all users of church computer equipment and networks to
18 comply with and sign the following policy.

19
20 **Persons Responsible for Presenting Resolution:** Rev. John Bletsch and Rev. James
21 H. Wilkin

22
23 **COMPUTER NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCESS POLICY**

24
25 The Internet is a worldwide network of computers that contains millions of pages of
26 information. Users are cautioned that many of these pages include offensive, sexually
27 explicit and inappropriate material. In general, it is difficult to avoid at least some contact
28 with this material while using the Internet. Even innocuous search requests may lead to
29 sites with highly offensive content. Additionally, having an e-mail address on the Internet
30 may lead to receipt of unsolicited e-mail containing offensive content. Users accessing
31 the Internet do so at their own risk, and the local United Methodist Church of the
32 Eastern Pennsylvania Conference (the Church) is not responsible for material viewed or
33 downloaded by users from the Internet. To minimize these risks, your use of the Internet
34 at the Church is governed by the following policy:

35
36 **PERMITTED USE OF INTERNET AND CHURCH COMPUTER NETWORK**

37
38 The computer network is the property of the Church and should primarily be used for
39 legitimate business and ministry purposes. The Church will decide what are legitimate
40 business and ministry purposes. Users are provided access to the computer network to
41 assist them in the performance of their jobs or for participation in their ministries. If
42 Users access the Internet for personal reasons such use should be governed by the
43 restrictions detailed below. All Users have a responsibility to use the Church's computer
44 resources and the Internet in a professional, lawful and ethical manner. Abuse of the
45 computer network or the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including possible
46 employment termination, and civil and/or criminal liability.

47 **COMPUTER NETWORK USE LIMITATIONS**

48

49 **Prohibited uses**

50 The Church's computer network may not be used to disseminate, view or store
51 pornographic text or images, or any other unauthorized materials. Employees may not
52 use the Church's Internet connection in excess for the purposes of gaming or
53 entertainment if it impacts their ability to carry out their assigned duties or impacts
54 another employee or ministry functions. Additionally, you may not use the computer
55 network to display, store or send (by e-mail or any other form of electronic
56 communication such as bulletin boards, chat rooms, Usenet groups, etc.) material that
57 is fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating,
58 defamatory or otherwise inappropriate or unlawful. Furthermore, anyone receiving such
59 materials should notify their supervisor immediately.

60

61 **Illegal copying**

62 Users may not illegally copy material protected under copyright law or make that
63 material available to others for copying. Users are responsible for complying with
64 copyright law and applicable licenses that may apply to software, files, graphics,
65 documents, messages and other material you wish to download or copy. Users may not
66 agree to a license or download any material for which a registration fee is charged
67 without first obtaining the express written permission of the Church.

68

69 **Communication of confidential and/or personal member information**

70 Unless expressly authorized to do so, Users are prohibited from sending, transmitting or
71 otherwise distributing confidential and/or personal member information, data or other
72 confidential information belonging to the Church. Unauthorized dissemination of such
73 material may result in severe disciplinary action as well as substantial civil and criminal
74 penalties under state and federal laws.

75

76 **DUTY NOT TO WASTE COMPUTER RESOURCES**

77

78 **Accessing the Internet**

79 To ensure security and avoid the spread of viruses, Users accessing the Internet
80 through a computer attached to the Church's network must do so through an Internet
81 firewall or other security device. Bypassing the Church's computer network security by
82 accessing the Internet directly by modem or other means is strictly prohibited unless the
83 computer you are using is not connected to the Church's network.

84

85 **System Passwords**

86 Unless expressly authorized to do so, users are prohibited from sharing or distributing
87 passwords to the church's network, computers or internet accounts.

88

89 **Frivolous use**

90 Computer resources are not unlimited. Network bandwidth and storage capacity have
91 finite limits, and all Users connected to the network have a responsibility to conserve
92 these resources. As such, Users must not deliberately perform acts that waste

93 computer resources or unfairly monopolize resources to the exclusion of others. These
94 acts include, but are not limited to, any of the following examples when done in excess
95 or inappropriately: sending unauthorized mass mailings or chain letters, spending
96 excessive amounts of time on the Internet, playing games, engaging in online chat
97 groups, uploading or downloading large files, accessing unauthorized streaming audio
98 and/or video files or otherwise creating unnecessary loads on network traffic.
99

100 **Virus detection**

101 Files obtained from sources outside the Church, including disks brought from home;
102 files downloaded from the Internet, newsgroups, bulletin boards or other online services;
103 files attached to e-mail; and files provided by other users or vendors may contain
104 dangerous computer viruses which may damage the Church's computer network. Users
105 should never download files from the Internet, accept e-mail attachments from outsiders
106 or use disks from non-Church sources without first scanning the material with Church-
107 approved virus checking software. If you suspect that a virus has been introduced into
108 the Church's network, notify the Church immediately.
109

110 **NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY**

111
112 Users are given computers and Internet access to assist them in the performance of
113 their jobs. Users should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store,
114 send or receive using the Church's computer equipment. The computer network is the
115 property of the Church and may be used only for Church purposes. Provisions shall be
116 made to protect confidential communications between the pastor and members and
117 constituents.
118

119 **Waiver of privacy rights**

120 Users expressly waive any right of privacy in anything the User creates stores, sends or
121 receives using the Church's computer equipment or Internet access. The User consents
122 to allow any authorized Church personnel access to and review of all materials created,
123 stored, sent or received by the User through any Church network or Church Internet
124 connection.
125

126 **Monitoring of computer and Internet usage**

127 The Church has the right to monitor and log any and all aspects of its computer system
128 including, but not limited to, monitoring Internet sites visited by Users, monitoring chat
129 and newsgroups, and monitoring file downloads and all communications sent and
130 received by Users.
131

132 **Blocking sites with inappropriate content**

133 The Church has the right to utilize software that makes it possible to identify and block
134 access to Internet sites containing sexually explicit or other material deemed
135 inappropriate in the workplace.
136

137 **Acknowledgement of understanding**

138 I have read and agree to comply with the terms of this policy governing the use of the
139 Church's computer network. I understand that violation of this policy may result in
140 disciplinary action, including possible termination and civil and criminal penalties.

141

142

143 _____
Local United Methodist Church

144

145

146 _____
Signature

_____ Date

147

148

149 _____
Printed name

1 **RESOLUTION # 2016 - 20 (Adjourned Session)**
2 **RESOLUTION TO 2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION**
3 **Resolution Establishing an Ad-Hoc Study Committee to Evaluate Alternative Fair**
4 **Voting Methods for Electing Members to Committees and Delegations**
5 **Presented by Arch Street United Methodist Church**
6

7 **WHEREAS**, The Constitution of The United Methodist Church calls for a “fair and open
8 process” to elect members to serve on annual conference boards and commissions and
9 for electing delegates to general conference (§ 13. Article 1.2) but does not specify the
10 method of election; and
11

12 **WHEREAS**, many elections at the annual conference level require numerous rounds of
13 voting when nominees for an office or seat do not receive enough votes required to fill the
14 seat – especially when electing general conference delegates – limiting the time available
15 for the Body to discern important matters of faith and practice; and
16

17 **WHEREAS**, ranked choice voting ensures all participants have equal voice in electing
18 one or more members to serve the Church by giving voting members the ability to rank
19 candidates in order of preference; and
20

21 **WHEREAS**, ranked choice voting (also known as “preferential voting”) is the
22 recommended voting method for Robert’s Rules of Order, and Robert’s Rules concludes
23 that “It makes possible a more representative result than under a rule that a plurality shall
24 elect.” (Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised In Chapter XIII §45. 11th edition, 2011, p.
25 425-28); and
26

27 **WHEREAS**, ranked choice voting has been used since the late 1800s and votes can be
28 counted by hand or using modern voting technology; and
29

30 **WHEREAS**, ranked choice voting is a process of ranking nominees in order of preference
31 (first choice, second choice, third choice, and so on). All first choices are counted, and
32 nominees with the fewest votes are eliminated. If a voter member’s first choice is
33 eliminated, their vote instantly goes to their next choice. Receiving a majority of votes
34 elects nominees for a single position and nominees for multiple positions (like a
35 conference board or delegation) are elected based on a determined threshold in
36 proportion to the number of votes as determined by the Droop quota. (See “Droop Quota”
37 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Droop_quota); and
38

39 **WHEREAS**, ranked ballots have been used for elections by organizations and in
40 communities across the United States and around the world (including Portland, Maine,
41 Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Australian House of Representatives, and the Republic of
42 Ireland to elect its president) to ensure fair results that are representative of the voting
43 body; (See “Where Ranked Choice Voting Is Used”
44 <http://www.fairvote.org/reforms/instant-runoff-voting/where-rcv-is-used->);
45

46 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference shall
47 establish an ad-hoc committee that includes the input of the Bishop, Conference

48 Secretary, and Election Judge along with conference members knowledgeable about
49 different voting methods to study the use of ranked choice voting or other alternative
50 voting methods for electing nominees when there are more than two nominees for a
51 conference board position or when electing a delegation.

52
53 **Person Responsible for Presenting the Resolution:** Michelle C. Whittaker