



# Rules of Order

## **Article I – Meetings**

1. The Annual Conference shall convene each year for the transaction of business as provided by the Discipline of The United Methodist Church and shall consider and act upon such other matters as may properly be brought before it.
2. The place for holding the Annual Conference Session shall have the approval of the Bishop and the Commission on Conference Sessions prior to conference action. (See Discipline, P. 603.2)
3. Special Sessions may be held as provided by the Discipline. (p. 603.5)
4. The Bishop assigned shall preside or arrange for another Bishop to preside in case of the Bishop's inability. In the absence of a Bishop, the Conference shall by ballot, without nomination or debate, elect a president pro tempore from among the traveling elders. The president thus elected shall discharge all the duties of a Bishop except ordination. (p. 603.6)
5. The choice of a visiting Bishop and/or major speakers shall be the prerogative of the Bishop.

## **Article II – Organization**

1. The sessions shall include a service of Holy Communion and Memorial Service and recording of the roll of members indicated in the Discipline (P. 605), including local pastors.
2. A Secretary, Treasurer, and Statistician and such other officers as the Conference may authorize, including assistant secretaries, shall be elected, the Secretary to nominate assistants.
3. The Conference shall establish a “Bar of the Conference” for the seating of its members.
4. The Conference may adopt an agenda prepared by the Bishop and the Commission on Conference Sessions.
5. The Conference Secretary shall assign Tellers who will be available for tabulation of written ballots as required in Plenary Sessions. Count votes will be counted by the Conference Secretarial Staff.
6. The Conference Secretary shall provide for teams of Pages who will be assigned for each Plenary Session to assist the distribution of printed reports and materials pertinent to business pending before the Plenary Session. These materials are to be provided to an Associate Secretary designated by the Conference Secretary.
  - a. Only authorized materials pertinent to Plenary Sessions business shall be distributed on the floor of conference. Agencies, institutions, and groups interested in provided promotional or informational material may do so by distributing it at the doors using their own personnel. Such material shall clearly identify the sponsoring agency, institution, or group.
  - b. The Commission on Conference Sessions shall not bar the distribution of informational or promotional material handled in accordance with 6.a.

## **Article III – Clergy Session**

A Clergy Session of Clergy Members and the Lay Members of the Board of Ordained Ministry shall be held for the purposes defined by the Discipline of The United Methodist Church.

## **Article IV – Duties of Officers**

The responsibilities and duties of officers shall be the general duties pertaining to these offices, those prescribed by the Discipline and such other duties as the Conference may from time to time direct.

## **Article V – Bonds and Audits**

All treasurers, other officers, trustees, and persons handling funds or securities of the Conference or any board, commission, committee, or other agency thereof shall be bonded in appropriate amounts.

All accounts of treasurers and trustees shall be audited by experienced disinterested public accountants or certified public accountants as provided by the Discipline. The auditor's reports and recommendations



shall be submitted to the Council on Finance and Administration.

### **Article VI – Commission on Conference Sessions**

There shall be a Commission on Conference Sessions whose responsibility, under the direction of the Bishop, shall be to prepare an agenda and arrange the program of the Annual Session. This shall include responsibility for soliciting reports from all Conference agencies and other reporting groups; caring for the physical arrangements at the site of Annual Conference; caring for all expenses mandated by the Conference; and planning all inspirational and devotional periods.

### **Article VII – Reports**

All boards, commissions, councils, societies, corporations, and other agencies related to the Conference shall receive notice of the time and person to whom reports of such bodies that are to be published in the Journal shall be sent.

### **Article VIII – Resolutions**

1. Resolutions shall be invited from local churches, conference agencies, conference related institutions, or individual church members. The deadline for receiving these resolutions shall be set by the Conference Secretary and shall be at least thirty days prior to Annual Conference. A notice to this effect along with the name and address of the person to whom resolutions shall be sent and the deadline date shall be appropriately publicized.
2. Resolutions shall be printed and distributed to the members of Annual Conference at least ten days prior to the Annual Conference session. These resolutions shall have a first priority upon the work of the Annual Conference. A Consent Calendar may be established by the Agenda Committee to assist the work of the Annual Conference. Any resolution may be lifted from the Consent Calendar upon the request by 10 members at the time the Consent Calendar is presented to the Annual Conference for adoption.
3. Resolutions received after the announced deadline or during the session of Annual Conference will be reviewed by the Agenda Committee. In consultation with the Presiding Bishop, this Committee will determine which resolutions will be printed for distribution to Conference members. The Agenda Committee shall include the Conference Secretary, the Chairperson of Conference Sessions, The Executive Director of Congregational Transformation/Connectional Ministries, Conference Lay Leader, and The Dean of the Cabinet.

### **Article IX – Disposition of Reports and Resolutions**

When presented to the Conference Plenary Session a resolution or report becomes the possession of the body, to be disposed of as it will, including amendment, substitution, etc.

### **Article X – Rules of Order Debate**

1. A member desiring to address the Conference shall proceed to a microphone and, after recognition by the presiding officer, shall first state clearly said member's name and charge represented.
2. No member who has the floor may be interrupted, except by the presiding officer for a breach of order, or a misrepresentation, or to bring to the attention of the Conference that the time has arrived for a special order, or to raise a question of a very high privilege.
  - Motions - Members may speak only to a motion before the Conference or to offer a motion. Speeches shall not precede a motion.
  - Motion for Previous Question - A motion for the "previous question" shall be made from a microphone, and shall not be in order unless at least two members have spoken for and two against the motion. A motion for the "previous question" shall not be appended to or supported by a speech. If in order, debate shall end, and a vote be taken on said



motion. The mover shall state whether the motion applies only to a proposed amendment to a motion, or all that is before it. A motion for the “previous question” must be sustained by a two-thirds vote of members within the Bar of the Conference.

- Motion to suspend the Rules - A motion to suspend the rules shall be sustained by two-thirds of the members within the Bar of the Conference.
- Voting - Voting shall be by raising the hand except when a standing count vote is called for, or when electronic voting is used. When a standing count vote is called for, members voting in favor of the motion shall rise and remain standing until counted. Then those voting against the motion shall rise and remain standing until counted, followed by those abstaining. In case of a disability that prevents voting in the prescribed fashion (i.e. standing) the presiding officer shall recognize the intended vote of that member by another means so as not to disenfranchise any member.
- Motions and Resolutions to be in Writing - All motions and resolutions shall be written and copies submitted to the presiding officer and the secretary.
- Length of Time Granted on the Floor of Annual Conference Session
  - Once recognized by the Bishop as Presiding Officer of the Annual Conference Session, any delegate seated within the bar of the Annual Conference or other person granted permission to speak within the bar of the Annual Conference may speak up to three minutes. A one minute warning may be given and after that time has elapsed, the Presiding Officer may interrupt that member and terminate permission to speak.
  - The privilege of addressing the Annual Conference Session is extended to groups and individuals making presentations on the adopted agenda, with clearly understood time commitments specified in advance. A one minute signal before the end of their allotted time may be given, and after that time, the Presiding Officer may interrupt those persons, groups, or individuals and terminate permission to speak.
- Other Parliamentary Rules - Other parliamentary rules shall be the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order (latest version).
- Plenary Sessions - In the Plenary Sessions, members desiring to offer motions which are not scheduled as part of an Agenda item (Art II, P. 4) shall confer in advance with the Chairperson of the Commission on Conference Sessions.

#### **Article XI – Conference Journal**

1. The Conference shall keep an exact record of its proceedings, and other items required by the Discipline, and shall publish annually a Journal which shall include the items required by the Discipline to be included in its Journal. The Journal shall incorporate the addresses and telephone numbers of the pastors, lay members and alternates, church lay leaders, certified lay speakers, and other such information, as the Conference shall direct. Agencies related to the Conference shall bear the precise corporate titles.
2. At the recommendation of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, during the Fall Budget Session, Nov. 9, 1996, the Annual Conference approved an action to charge for the Journal rather than have it supplied at no charge, beginning in 1997.

#### **Article XII – Responsibilities of Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Other Organizations Required by the Discipline**

1. The various boards, commissions, committees, and other organizations required to be a part of the Annual Conference structure are as set forth in the Discipline, as the same may from time to time be amended, provided, however, that the Conference may refer to such organizations such matters as are not inconsistent there with.

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2. Additional boards, commissions, committees, and organizations may be authorized by the Conference, where it is deemed inappropriate or inexpedient to refer a subject proposal to an existing organization.
  3. Ex-officio members who have been appointed or elected to serve the Conference on boards, commissions, committees, and other organizations shall have the right to vote. Advisory members shall have the right to voice without vote.

### **Article XIII – Tenure on Boards, etc.**

NO person may serve on the same board, commission, council, or committee of this Conference for a longer continuous period than two quadrennium except those serving in an ex-officio capacity or other position involving experience making replacement inexpedient when upon the request of such organization to the nominating committee and exception may be recommended to the Conference. It is understood that the maximum term is ten years or two quadrenniums. Persons serving two years or less on a board or agency will be considered eligible for the two quadrennium tenure.

1. The period of service of all elected to office shall begin with the adjournment of the Conference Session in which they were elected.
2. All boards, agencies, and commissions, required by the Discipline to organize annually shall reorganize within two weeks of the Annual Conference and the names of the officers shall be reported to the Conference Secretary for inclusion in the Journal.
3. The Officiary of the local church shall be elected to serve on the basis of the calendar year.
4. No person shall serve on more than one major agency (i.e., boards, commissions, councils, divisions) of the Annual Conference, except in the case of ex-officio members and minority ethnic members of our Conference who are permitted to serve on at least two Conference agencies.
5. No person shall serve on the Board of Directors/Board of Trustees of an incorporated agency affiliated with the Annual Conference, whose board members are elected by the Conference, except in the case of ex-officio members of boards, and ethnic minority members of the Conference who shall follow the rule of the Conference and that this rule be implemented in the immediate future years by the process of attrition.

### **Article XIV – Attendance**

Punctual and regular attendance of the members of the Conference is expected except in cases of emergency. Those requesting to be excused must make the request in writing to the Conference Secretary. In the case of anticipated absence of lay members, arrangement should be made to have the alternate lay member seated. Every charge should be represented at all business sessions. (Discipline P. 602.4)

### **Article XV – Financial Reports**

All boards and agencies shall submit annually financial reports reflecting assets and liabilities as well as receipts and disbursements, which shall be printed in the Journal.

### **Article XVI – Election Process for General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegates**

The Nomination process for the election of delegates to the 2020 General Conference and 2020 Jurisdictional Conference shall be governed by the following procedures:

1. Nominating petitions will be sent to clergy members in full connection and lay members of the Annual Conference at least three months prior to the Annual Conference session.
2. Nominating petitions will allow for a maximum of 10 nominees. Persons will be nominated when their names have been identified on 10 nominating petitions. As in the election process, the nominations process shall allow clergy to nominate clergy and laity to nominate laity.
3. Nominees shall fulfill the Disciplinary and Constitutional requirements outlined in the Constitution, paragraphs 35 and 36.

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4. Nominating petitions shall be returned to the Conference Secretary no later than March 1, 2019.
  5. The Board of Lay Ministry may make additional laity nominations by March 10, 2019.
  6. After March 1, 2019, all nominees will be provided an acceptance form. Nominees will return their acceptance form by March 31, 2019 for their names to appear on the ballot.
  7. Nominees will provide biographical information and a brief written statement by March 31, 2019. The list of nominees, biographical material and statements will be published and/or distributed through as many means as possible.
  8. From the nominee acceptance forms, the Conference Secretary will prepare separate clergy and laity ballots. The ballots will include spaces for write-ins.
  9. Nominations will be accepted from the floor provided a nominating petition fulfilling #2 above and an acceptance form are duly presented. Five hundred copies of a biographical profile and statement are required for immediate distribution.
  10. Election shall be by majority of valid ballots cast on each ballot, clergy and laity voting separately.
  11. Balloting for the specified number of delegates to General Conference will begin first. These persons are elected as delegates to General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference. After their election, the additional number of persons to be elected as Jurisdictional Conference delegates shall begin. Upon completion of these elections, a final ballot will be taken to elect three alternates to Jurisdictional Conference; the three persons receiving the highest number of votes will be elected.
  12. Judges of Elections shall be appointed by the Conference Secretary to oversee the tabulation of ballots, certify the election of delegates, and convey the ballots and report to the Conference Secretary.
  13. All Jurisdictional Conference delegates will be alternate delegates to the General Conference in order of their election.
  14. The Annual Conference will assume the costs of the first clergy and laity alternates to attend the General Conference. The Annual Conference will assume the costs of the six alternates to attend the Jurisdictional Conference.

#### **Article XVII - Nomination of Episcopal Candidates**

1. The Annual Conference shall, in the year preceding the conference session during which Episcopal candidates are to be nominated, solicit potential nominees from all the members both lay and clergy of the Annual Conference. Each member may nominate the number of Elders for which there are vacancies in the jurisdiction to be filled, provided the nominees are Elders in good standing in the Conference. Any Elder who receives at least 10 nominations will have their biographical details and personal statement published and/or distributed through as many means as possible for study prior to the electing conference session.
2. At the EPA annual conference session immediately prior to the next regular session of the North-eastern Jurisdictional Conference, the EPA jurisdictional delegation may present one or more names to the annual conference for endorsement. The jurisdictional delegation may also choose to present no names to the annual conference. If the delegation places one or more names before the conference, annual conference delegates shall then proceed to confirm the recommendation(s) of the delegation by a 2/3 vote by those present and voting. Likewise, if the delegation recommends no persons, the annual conference shall vote to accept that recommendation by the same 2/3 vote.
3. If the opening ballot fails to obtain the necessary 2/3 majority to confirm the delegation's recommendation(s), additional nominations from the floor shall then be in order, provided:
  - The ordained elder(s) in full connection being nominated from the floor shall have given consent prior to the making of the nomination, and will at the time the nomination is



made present a nominating petition to the secretary of the annual conference with the names and signatures of ten persons, laity or clergy, who are members of the Annual Conference.

- At least five hundred copies of a biographical profile and statement for such nominees will be available and distributed to annual conference delegates at the time the nomination is made.
  - A minimum of four hours shall elapse, after all nominations have been received from the floor, before a ballot is taken.
4. The annual conference shall then proceed to endorse a nominee (or nominees) by ballot as follows: all nominees shall be listed on the ballot, and a ballot taken. Any person(s) receiving a 2/3 vote would move forward as the endorsed Episcopal nominee(s) of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference; provided that annual conference delegates may not vote on any ballot for more candidates than the number of open Episcopal seats anticipated at the ensuing Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference.
  5. After five such ballots have been taken, a motion to discontinue balloting shall then be in order, requiring a simple majority. Any persons who have received the requisite 2/3 majority shall be considered the endorsed Episcopal nominee(s) of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. If no person has obtained the required 2/3 majority, then no person shall be considered to have been endorsed by the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.
  6. The Jurisdictional delegation shall not be bound by any action of the delegation or the annual conference regarding confirmed and/or endorsed nominees when the Jurisdictional delegates cast their votes at Jurisdictional Conference (p 405.1).

### **Article XVIII - Petitions to General Conference**

For any General Conference resolution or proposed disciplinary change, the required vote to approve such resolutions shall require a 3/4 majority of votes cast. These resolutions will be placed at the beginning of the Conference Sessions.

### **Article XVIII – Amendments**

These Rules and Regulations may be amended at any regular session of the Conference provided six hours shall elapse after the first reading before action is taken. A majority vote shall be necessary to adopt. Amendment may be made at a Special Session provided the proposed amendment is incorporated in the call.

### **Article XX**

The Conference Secretary as editor of the Journal shall be authorized to make editorial changes to paragraph numbers to reflect the language of the current Book of Discipline. The Secretary will be further authorized to change the years listed in Article XVI as appropriate for subsequent general conference.

### **Article XXI**

Remote Participation Annual Conference - In accordance with Section 5708 of the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law, the regular Annual Conference session, a Special Annual Conference session, or parts of either, can be held by means of remote participation, at the discretion of the presiding Bishop. Notice of such a session and all such means of remote participation shall meet all requirements of the Discipline, applicable state law, and the Rules of Order, including without limitation:

- authorization and prior notice of the meeting and means of participation;
- verification of membership and voting credentials;
- reasonable opportunity to hear, participate and vote; and
- record and maintain a record of any votes or other actions.



All votes taken at a remote Annual Conference shall be cast and tallied via electronic means and all members who participate remotely shall be deemed present. At a remote Annual Conference, floor nominations of general and jurisdictional conference delegate candidates pursuant to Article XVI.2 and episcopal candidates pursuant to Article XVII.3 may be delivered to the Secretary electronically; and, the 10 signatures required for episcopal candidate petitions may be gathered electronically.