

RULES - PROCEDURE - ORGANIZATION
WEST VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE - THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
(All paragraph references are to the *2016 Book of Discipline* unless otherwise noted)

PART A: RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION

I. RULES

1. **Adoption of Rules.** During the first business session, each Annual Conference shall adopt its rules which will then be in effect for the order and organization of the Annual Conference.
2. **Suspending or Amending Rules.**
 - a. Any person or persons desiring to present an amendment or amendments to the Conference Rules must present the proposed amendment or amendments in writing to the Conference Rules Committee by February 1st of each year.
 - b. The Conference Rules Committee shall assemble, edit and reproduce and present such proposed amendments to the Conference, with its recommendation, but they shall not have the power to change the essential meaning of any proposed amendment or amendments. However, where the proposed change is so simple as to be readily understood, the committee shall not be required to reproduce the report. Provided, further, however, that the Committee on Rules shall have the right to propose any alternative change or new rule or rules that the committee deems advisable and which may be given as a part of the committee's report to the Annual Conference. Any agency proposing a substantive revision or amendment to one of the present Conference Rules, shall send a representative to appear before the Committee on Rules for the purpose of clarification and interpretation.
 - c. If in the course of Annual Conference session, a motion is made from the floor that would amend the rules of the Annual Conference, a motion to suspend Rule I.2.a. and any other rule interfering with said proposed action must first prevail, and then said amendment shall be referred to the Rules Committee prior to vote by the Annual Conference session. Proposed rule will be brought back before the Annual Conference Session within 24 hours.
 - d. All amendments must be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.
 - e. All amendments shall become effective immediately upon their adoption unless otherwise indicated.
 - f. These rules may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.
3. **Supplemental Authority.** The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all questions of Parliamentary Procedure where such questions are not otherwise provided for by these standing rules.
4. **Printing of Rules.** These rules, with any modification as adopted, shall be published in the *Conference Workbook* and in all Conference publications of minutes and *Journals* so as to enable Conference members to refer readily to them.

II. RULES OF ORDER AND BUSINESS PROCEDURE

1. **Sessions.** The Annual Conference sessions and such special or adjourned sessions as may be required shall be held with the resident bishop presiding as provided in ¶¶603.2,4,5,6.
2. **Roll Call.** The roll call shall be taken, as the conference may direct, upon recommendation by the Secretary of the Annual Conference.
3. **Bar of the Conference.** An area of the assembly room sufficient in size to seat all clergy and lay members shall be designated as the bar of the Conference. Except by special invitation and where

accessibility issues exist, visitors to the Conference shall not sit within the bar of the Conference, but shall occupy an area designated for their use. When the bar of the Conference shall have been established, only members within that area shall be entitled to vote when the vote is taken.

4. **Order of Business.** After devotional service the daily business session of the Conference shall be conducted as follows:
 - a. Report of Program Committee on daily proceedings, courtesies, and other responsibilities.
 - b. Report of other standing administrative and special agencies.
 - c. Calendar and agenda.
 - d. Miscellaneous business.
5. **Adoption of Conference Session Agenda ¶605.2** Upon recommendation of the Committee on Annual Conference Program, the Annual Conference shall adopt an agenda and calendar for Conference Sessions.

6. **Expediting Conference Business.** The Committee on Annual Conference Program shall be responsible for interpretation and promotion of the missional and program ministries of the Annual Conference at conference sessions.

The Conference Secretary shall present, at the opening session, a *consent calendar* consisting of printed reports not requiring discussion. Twenty-four hours later, items may be removed from the consent calendar upon motion with an affirmative vote of 50 persons. The items remaining on the *consent calendar* shall then be voted upon in an omnibus motion.

Individuals, local churches, parishes and districts may submit resolutions to be printed in the *Conference Workbook*, or may submit them later under Rule 14 of Section IV MISCELLANEOUS STANDING RULES OF THE CONFERENCE.

Resolutions that deal with structure or administration and are proposed by an Annual Conference agency shall be included in that agency's report. Agency resolutions dealing with all other matters and resolutions from all other sources shall be grouped in a section of the *Conference Workbook* headed Resolutions with the submitting group clearly defined, and presented by the Committee on Annual Conference Program.

7. **Securing the Floor.** Members desiring to speak to the Conference shall arise at their seat within the bar of the Conference, respectfully address the presiding officer, using the term, Bishop "(last name)", or "Mr./Ms. Chairperson," and, after recognition, proceed to the nearest microphone, where, before speaking, the member shall be identified by name and local church.

8. **Interrupting the Speaker.** No member who has the floor may be interrupted except for a breach of order, or a misrepresentation, or to direct the attention of the Conference to the fact that the time has arrived for an order of the day, or to raise a very urgent question of high privilege.

9. **Debate.** After a question has been stated by the chair, it is before the Conference for consideration and action. All resolutions, reports from agencies, communications to the Conference, all amendments proposed to the Conference, and all other motions, except undebatable motions, may be debated before final action is taken on them, unless by a two-thirds vote the Conference decides to dispose of them.

10. **Length of Speech.** Each speech from the floor must be limited to three minutes unless the speaker's time is extended by the Conference by a majority vote. This three-minute limit may be reduced by a majority vote of the Conference at any time, and for any period of duration.

11. **Speaking More Than Once.** No member of the Conference shall speak a second time on the same question if any member who has not spoken desires the floor, and no more than twice on the same subject under the same motion.

12. **Question of High Privilege.** A member of the Conference claiming the floor at any time for what the member believes to be a very urgent question of high privilege shall be allowed to indicate briefly the nature of the question, and if it is adjudged by the chair to be such, the member may proceed until the chair judges that such privilege has been exhausted.

13. **Voting Procedure.** Voting shall be by a show of hands unless otherwise ordered by the Presiding Bishop or Presiding Officer. A count vote may be ordered on call of any member supported by one-third of the members present and voting, in which case, the members shall rise from their seats and stand until

counted. An “aye” or “nay” vote by secret ballot may be ordered on call of any member, supported by one-third of the members present and voting.

14. **Division of Question.** Before a vote is taken, any member shall have the right to call for a division of any question, if it is subject to such division as the members indicate. If no member objects, the division shall be made; but, if there is objection, the chair shall put the question of division to vote, not waiting for a second.

15. **Precedence of Secondary Motions.** If any one or more of the following motions shall be made when one or more other motions are pending, the order of their procedure in relation to another shall be the same as the order on their listing below:

- a. To fix the time to which the Conference shall adjourn. (This motion is subject to amendments, or it may be laid on the table.)
- b. To adjourn.
- c. To take recess.
- d. To order the previous question.
- e. To lay on the table.
- f. To limit or extend the limits of debate.
- g. To postpone to a given time.
- h. To commit or refer.
- i. To amend or substitute (one amendment being allowed to an amendment).
- j. To postpone indefinitely.

16. **Tabling Related Motions.** No motion that adheres to another motion, or has another motion adhering to it, can be laid on the table by itself. Such motions, if laid on the table, carry with them the motions to which they respectively adhere, or which adhere to them.

17. **Motion to Adopt.** A motion is a proposal that the assembly take certain action or that it express itself as holding certain views. Any member of the Conference may make such a proposal. When the motion is seconded by a member saying, “I second the motion,” which may be done without obtaining the floor and generally without rising, it shall be before the body.

18. **Undebatable Motions.** The following motions shall be acted upon without debate:

- a. To adjourn, when unqualified, except to adjourn the Conference finally.
- b. To suspend the rules.
- c. To lay on the table.
- d. To take from the table.
- e. To call for the previous question, and motions to close, limit, or extend the limits of debate.
- f. To amend an undebatable motion.
- g. To consider an undebatable motion.
- h. To dispense with the reading of the minutes.
- i. To call for the order of the day.

19. **Right of the Main Question.** The main question may be opened to debate under the following motions: to adopt, to commit or refer, to substitute, to postpone, and to reconsider. No new motion, resolution or subject shall be entertained until the one under consideration shall have been disposed of except as provided for under “voting procedure.” This does not apply to undebatable questions.

20. **Reference of a Report.** It shall be in order for the Conference to refer to an agency committee a section or a part of a report or resolution that is before the Conference for consideration, or any amendment offered thereto.

21. **Procedure for Consideration of Substitute Motions.** When a resolution or committee report is properly before the Conference for consideration and action, even if amendments are pending, a substitute may be offered by any member moving that the same be substituted for the report, resolution, or amendment under consideration.

The substitute shall be an alternative to what is before the body and not simply a negation of the main motion as determined by the presiding officer. Debate on the motion to substitute will be limited to the question of substitution only. No amendments to the main motion or the substitute will be considered during this period of initial consideration.

Following the debate on the motion to substitute, a vote on substitution will occur. If the motion to substitute prevails by majority vote, the substitute motion becomes the main motion. If the motion to substitute fails to receive a majority vote, the original main motion remains on the floor for consideration. Debate, including the offering of amendments, moves forward on the main motion as per the rules of procedure.

22. The Previous Question. When any member moves the previous question (that is, that the vote be now taken on the motion or motions pending), they shall indicate to what they intend it to apply, if any secondary motion or motions are also pending. If they do not so indicate, it shall be regarded as applying only to the immediately pending question. This motion shall be taken without debate, and shall require two-thirds vote of those present and voting for its adoption; and if it is adopted, the vote shall be taken on the motion or motions to which it applies without further debate.

23. Unlawful Motion After Speech. It shall not be in order for a member immediately after discussing a pending question, and before relinquishing the floor, to make a motion whose adoption would limit or stop debate.

24. Exceptions to Majority Vote. A majority of those voting shall decide all questions with the following exceptions:

- a. One-third of those present and voting shall suffice to sustain a call for a count vote in case the decision of the chair is doubted. A tie vote sustains the chair.
- b. A two-thirds vote shall be required;
 1. to sustain a motion to suspend or amend the rules;
 2. to sustain a motion for the previous question (see, "Previous Question" above), or any motion whose adoption would limit debate;
 3. to set aside a special order;
 4. to consider a special order before the time set therefore;
 5. to sustain a request of the Committee on Annual Conference Sessions Program Committee for the presentation of any person after the second day of the Conference Session.

25. Reconsideration. A motion to reconsider an action of the Conference shall be in order at any time if requested by a member who voted with the prevailing side. The motion to reconsider may not be debated, if the original motion was non debatable.

26. Questions of Order. It is the duty of the presiding officer to enforce the rules and orders of the Conference, without debate or delay. It is also the right of every member who notices the breach of a rule, to insist upon its enforcement. In such a case the member rises from his/her seat and says, Bishop (last name), or Mr./Ms. Chairperson, "I rise to a point of order". The speaker immediately takes his/her seat. The chair requests the member to state the point of order, which he/she does and resumes his/her seat. The chair decides the point and, if no appeal is made and the member has not been guilty of any serious breach of decorum, the chair will permit him/her to resume his/her speech. But, if the member's remarks are decided to be improper and any one objects, he/she cannot continue without a vote of the Conference to that effect.

27. Motion to Adjourn. The motion to adjourn, when unqualified, shall be taken without debate, and shall always be in order, except:

- a. When a member has the floor.
- b. When a question is actually put, or a vote is being taken, and before it is finally decided.
- c. When the previous question has been ordered and action is pending.
- d. When a motion to adjourn has been lost, and no business or debate has intervened.
- e. When the motion to fix the time to which the Conference shall adjourn is pending. The foregoing does not apply to a motion for final adjournment of the Conference.

PART B: RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ANNUAL
CONFERENCE

I. ORGANIZATION

1. **Conference Secretary** (§603.7) At the first session following the General Conference, on nomination by the Resident Bishop, after consultation with the district superintendents, and with additional nominations permitted from the floor, the Annual Conference shall elect a secretary to serve for the succeeding quadrennium. The Conference shall annually elect, upon nomination of the Secretary, assistant secretaries from the clergy or lay membership to serve during and after the session in the preparation of minutes, memoirs and other materials for publication in the *Conference Workbook* and the *Journal*.

The Conference Secretary shall be editor of the *Conference Workbook* and *Journal*, custodian of clergy records, and maintain a database for the Nominations Committee.

The compensation and expenses of the Conference Secretary shall be approved by the Annual Conference, upon recommendation of the Council on Finance and Administration, and shall be included in the Conference Administration Budget.

The Conference Secretary shall be accountable to the Resident Bishop.

2. **Conference Statistician** (§603.7) At the first session following the General Conference, on nomination by Resident Bishop, after consultation with the district superintendents, and with additional nominations permitted from the floor, the Annual Conference shall elect a statistician to serve for the succeeding quadrennium.

The financial costs of the Conference Statistician shall be approved by the Annual Conference upon recommendation of the Council on Finance and Administration and shall be included in the Conference Administration Budget.

3. **Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services** (§619) At the first session following the General Conference, on nomination of the Council on Finance and Administration, the Annual Conference shall elect a Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services to serve during the succeeding quadrennium or until a successor shall be elected and qualify. Should a vacancy occur during the quadrennium, the Council on Finance and Administration shall fill the position until the next session of the Annual Conference.

The Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services in the West Virginia Annual Conference shall also serve as Executive Secretary of the Board of Pensions-Pension Funds, Inc. and as Affirmative Action Officer for the Annual Conference.

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration shall determine the job description of the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services and recommend the annual compensation to be approved by the Annual Conference.

The support staff related to administering fiscal affairs shall be engaged by and amenable to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration. The Compensation of the Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services and the financial cost of the support staff in the Treasurer's office shall be approved by the Annual Conference upon recommendation by the Council on Finance and Administration and shall be included in the budget of the Conference Treasurer's Office.

The support staff related to administering the Board of Pension's program shall be engaged by and amenable to the Conference Board of Pensions-Pension Funds, Inc. The financial cost of this support staff shall be included in the administrative budget of the Conference Board of Pensions-Pension Funds, Inc.

4. **Conference Lay Leader** (§603.9 and §609) At the first session following the General Conference, the Annual Conference shall elect a Conference Lay Leader to serve for the succeeding quadrennium. The nomination shall originate with the Conference Lay Ministry Team and be brought to the floor by the Conference Committee on Nominations. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

The Conference Lay Leader shall assume office at the close of the Annual Conference Session in which elected. The term of office of the Conference Lay Leader shall be for a maximum of two quadrennia.

The immediate past Conference Lay Leader shall serve as an ex-officio member (with voice and vote) on the Conference Lay Ministry Team for one year in the following quadrennium.

5. **Conference Associate Lay Leader(s)** ¶607.9 At the first session following the General Conference, the Annual Conference shall elect associate lay leader(s) for the succeeding quadrennium. The nomination(s) shall originate with the Conference Lay Ministry Team and be brought to the floor by the Nominations Committee. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. No person shall hold the office for more than two quadrennia.

The Associate Lay Leader shall be the convener of the conference Covenant Council.

6. **Conference Director of Lay Speaking Ministry** (¶631.6d) At the first session following the General Conference, the Annual Conference shall elect a Conference Director of Lay Speaking Ministries to serve for the succeeding quadrennium. The nomination shall originate with the Conference Lay Ministry Team and be brought to the floor by the Nominations Committee. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. The Conference Director of Lay Speaking Ministries shall assume office at the close of the annual conference session in which elected. No person shall hold the office for more than two quadrennia.

7. **The Conference Program Staff.** There shall be a conference program ministries staff, who shall be responsible for the following areas of ministry: evangelism; stewardship; communications and public relations; leadership development; congregational development; camping and outdoor ministries; ethnic ministries; higher education and campus ministries; children and youth ministries; and mission/outreach. The program staff shall serve on conference agencies as assigned by the Director of Connectional Ministries or as defined by the membership of the agencies.

II. CONFERENCE AGENCIES

1. Administrative Review

¶636 There shall be a conference administrative review committee.

- a. Purpose: To ensure that the disciplinary procedures for discontinuance of provisional membership (¶327.6), involuntary leave of absence (¶354), involuntary retirement (¶357.3), or administrative location (¶359) are properly followed.
- b. Membership: The membership shall be nominated by the bishop and elected quadrennially by the clergy session; Membership is restricted to clergy in full connection who are not members of the cabinet, Board of Ordained Ministry, or immediate family members of such.
 1. Chairperson elected by team
 2. three clergy in full connection
 3. two alternates

2. Annual Conference Program

- a. Purpose: Shall be responsible for interpretation and promotion of the missional and program ministries of the Annual Conference at annual and special sessions through implementation of program, worship, adopted agenda, and presentation of resolutions. Additional responsibilities related to the conference session shall include matters related to housing, meals and stipends, courtesies, review of District Journals, and recommendations concerning the site of the Annual Conference.
- b. Membership:
 1. Bishop
 2. Conference Secretary
 3. host district superintendent
 4. host pastors
 5. Director of Leadership Formation and Ministry Staff
 6. Director of Discipleship, Leadership and Congregational Vitality
 7. Director of Administrative Services
 8. Conference Lay Leader

9. chairperson of Rules Committee
 10. additional persons to be nominated by the Bishop insuring inclusiveness (race, gender, age, marital status, and people who are physically challenged)
- 3. Archives and History**
- ¶641 There shall be a conference commission on archives and history.
- a. Purpose: To collect and preserve historically significant records of the annual conference and its agencies.
 - b. Membership:
 1. a chairperson
 2. nine district representatives
 3. Director of the Annie Merner Pfeiffer Library
 4. Archivist of the Annie Merner Pfeiffer Library
 5. President of the WV Annual Conference Historical Society
 6. Secretary/Treasurer of the WV Annual Conference Historical Society
 7. one member at large
- 4. Camping and Outdoor Ministries**
- a. Purpose: Shall be responsible for planning and directing the camps and conference education program including the operation of the Educational Center.
 - b. Membership:
 1. chairperson
 2. nine district representatives
 3. two at-large members
 4. Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries (without vote)
 5. Spring Heights Camp Manager (without vote)
 6. Two Conference Trustees, ex officio, to be named the Conference Board of Trustees.
- 5. Christian Unity**
- ¶642 There shall be a conference committee on Christian unity and inter-religious concerns.
- a. Purpose: To take initiative in ecumenical and inter-religious concerns
 - b. Membership:
 1. chairperson designated as the Ecumenical Officer of the Annual Conference
 2. nine district representatives
 - c. This agency shall designate delegates to the West Virginia Council of Churches and shall relate to the General Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns.
- 6. Clergy Support and Pastoral Care**
- a. Purpose: To provide support services for all clergy and their immediate families in the areas of counseling funds, peer support, retreats and other opportunities for spiritual, emotional and physical wellness.
 - b. Membership:
 1. chairperson
 2. one elder
 3. one deacon
 4. one representative from the Ministers' Wives/Mates Association
 5. one representative from the Associate Member/Local Pastor Association
 6. up to four lay at-large members
- 7. Communications**
- ¶646. There shall be a commission on communications.
- a. Purpose: To meet the communication, publication, multimedia, public and media relations, interpretation, and promotional needs of the annual conference.

- b. Membership:
 1. chairperson
 2. nine district representatives
 3. up to seven at-large members
 4. Director of Communications (without vote)
- c. This agency shall relate to United Methodist Communications.

8. Congregational Development

- a. Purpose: To develop new faith communities, address congregational revitalization issues, and oversee the Kingdom Builders.
- b. Membership:
 1. chairperson
 2. nine district representatives
 3. up to seven at-large members to be nominated by the Nominations Committee
 4. the Director of Congregational Development (without vote).
- c. This agency shall relate to Discipleship Ministries of the General Church.

9. Covenant Council

- a. Purpose: Spiritual discernment and leadership for the Annual Conference
 1. To wrestle with critical issues that face our church and how they impact our ministry.
 2. To live out and implement the conference vision.
 3. To recommend conference vision and goals for adoption.
 4. To recommend modifications to the conference vision and goals.
 5. To develop strategies for implementation of the conference vision and goals.
 6. To assist in coordinating the program ministries of the Annual Conference through the office of connectional ministries.
- b. Membership:
 1. chairperson from each ministry team and conference agency
 2. Bishop (with voice and no vote)
 3. all district superintendents of the Annual Conference
 4. Conference Secretary
 5. Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services
 6. Director of Leadership Formation and Ministry Staff
 7. Director of Discipleship, Leadership and Congregational Vitality
 8. President of the United Methodist Foundation
 9. members of the conference program ministries staff
 10. coordinators of VIM, Youth, Stewardship, Scouting, and Disaster Response
 11. Conference Secretary of Global Ministries
 12. members of the annual conference serving on General Boards and Agencies
 13. Conference Lay Leader
 14. Associate Conference Lay Leader(s)
 15. nine district lay representatives (chosen by the Cabinet)
 16. up to seven at-large members for inclusiveness
- c. The leadership team of the Covenant Council shall include Convener (Associate Lay Leader), Directors of Leadership Formation and Ministry Staff and Discipleship, Leadership and Congregational Vitality, three additional members of the Council elected by the Council for the quadrennium (2 lay and 1 clergy). The leadership team will discern, coordinate, and develop the agenda, process, and work of the Covenant Council.
- d. This agency shall relate to the Connectional Table of the General Church.

10. Episcopacy

¶637 There shall be a conference committee on episcopacy.

- a. Purpose: Shall meet at least annually as convened by the bishop to assume the functions as listed in the *Book of Discipline*.

- b. Membership:
 1. ten members (1/5th to be appointed by the bishop)
 2. lay and clergy members of the jurisdictional committee on episcopacy.
 3. the Conference lay leader

11. Episcopal Residence

¶638 There shall be an Episcopal residence committee.

- a. Purpose: To provide housing for presiding bishop of the West Virginia Area.
- b. Membership:
 1. chairperson or designate of Episcopacy
 2. president or designate of Finance and Administration
 3. president or designate of Trustees

12. Equitable Compensation

¶625 There shall be a commission on equitable compensation.

- a. Purpose: To support full-time clergy serving as pastors in the charges of the annual conference as defined in the *Book of Discipline*.
- b. Membership:
 1. chairperson
 2. three lay persons (one from a church with less than 200 members)
 3. three clergy persons (one district superintendent and one from a church with less than 200 members)

13. Ethnic Local Church Concerns

¶632 There shall be in every annual conference a conference committee on ethnic local church concerns or other structure.

- a. Purpose: Shall follow the basic functions of ¶632 in order to support and resource the ethnic local church.
- b. Membership:
 1. Five members
 2. Care shall be taken to ensure balance of clergy, laity, gender, youth and young adult.
 3. It is recommended that the majority of members be representative of racial and ethnic people, reflecting the racial and ethnic constituencies and local churches of the annual conference.
 4. Director of Connectional Ministries or their designee (without vote)

14. Evangelism ¶630.3

- a. Purpose: To plan and promote an effective, comprehensive ministry of evangelism and to train and resource clergy and laity in ministries of evangelism.
- b. Membership:
 1. chairperson
 2. a representative from Congregational Development team
 3. a representative from Global Ministries team
 4. the Conference Lay Leader
 5. Director of Evangelism and Congregational Development (without vote)
 6. one person from each district
 7. up to five at-large members
- c. This agency shall relate to the Discipleship Ministries of the General Church.

15. Finance and Administration

¶611 There shall be a conference council on finance and administration.

- a. Purpose: To develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, procedures, and management services for the annual conference.

- b. Membership:
 - 1. five to twenty-one members
 - 2. one more lay than clergy
 - 3. one person from a church with less than 200 members
 - 4. Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services (without vote)
 - 5. a member of GCFA
 - 6. Bishop (without vote)
 - 7. a district superintendent (without vote)
 - 8. Directors of Connectional Ministries (without vote)
 - 9. President of the United Methodist Foundation (without vote)
- c. Term begins with adjournment of the session when elected. Vacancies are to be filled temporarily by the agency.
- d. This agency shall relate to the General Council on Finance and Administration.

16. Global Ministries

¶633 The annual conference shall organize a board of global ministries.

- a. Purpose: To maintain the connectional relationship and provide for global ministries responsibilities related to the objectives and scope of work of the General Board of Global Ministries as set forth in Paragraphs 1302-1303.
- b. Membership:
 - 1. chairperson
 - 2. Conference Secretary of Global Ministries
 - 3. Coordinators to be nominated by Nominations:
 - Missions Coordinator
 - Health and Welfare Coordinator
 - Parish Development Coordinator
 - Church and Community Worker Advisory Committee Coordinator
 - Hunger Grants Coordinator
 - 4. Coordinators to be nominated annually by the Covenant Council (not subject to Rule IV.7.b):
 - Disaster Response Coordinator
 - Volunteers-in-Mission Coordinator
 - Refugee/Immigration Coordinator
 - Health and Disabilities Coordinator
 - 5. United Methodist Women's Coordinator for Education and Interpretation or in the event the position is not filled, the United Methodist Women's Conference President or her designee.
 - 6. A District Superintendent (without vote)
 - 7. Conference Director of Global Ministries (without vote)
 - 8. Five (5) members at large.
- c. This agency shall relate to the General Board of Global Ministries.

17. Higher Education and Campus Ministry

¶634 There shall be a board of higher education and campus ministry.

- a. Purpose: To assume the responsibilities as set forth in the *Book of Discipline*.
- b. Membership:
 - 1. chairperson
 - 2. nine district representatives
 - 3. chairperson of UM Student Movement
 - 4. up to seven at-large members
 - 5. all campus pastors without vote
 - 6. Director of Young Disciples and Outdoor Ministries.
- c. This agency shall relate to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

18. Investigation-Diaconal Ministers

¶2703.3b There shall be a committee on investigation as set forth in the *Book of Discipline*.

19. Justice and Advocacy

¶644 & ¶629. The annual conference shall assume responsibility as set forth in ¶644 and ¶629 for organizing a Board of Church and Society or other structure and/or a Commission on Status and Role of Women, or other structure to promote justice in society.

- a. Purpose: Shall develop and promote programs on Christian social concerns within the bounds of the conference.
- b. Membership:
 1. chairperson
 2. nine district representatives
 3. seven at-large members
 4. ex-officio members
 5. Director of Communications (without vote)
 6. UMW Mission Coordinator for Social Action
- c. This agency shall relate to the General Board of Church and Society and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

20. Laity

¶631 There shall be a conference board of laity or other equivalent structure.

- a. Purpose: To provide for the ministry of the laity related to the objectives of the Discipleship Ministries of the General Church as set forth in ¶¶1101-1126.
- b. Membership:
 1. chairperson (Conference Lay Leader (¶631.4))
 2. nine district lay leaders
 3. up to seven at-large members
 4. Conference Lay Leader
 5. Associate Conference Lay Leader(s)
 6. immediate past Conference Lay Leader (for first year of quadrennium)
 7. Conference Director of Lay Speaking
 8. Conference presidents of men, women, youth, and campus ministry.
 9. a district superintendent
 10. Director of Discipleship, Leadership and Congregational Vitality (without vote)
- c. This agency shall be named the Conference Lay Ministry Team and relates to the Discipleship Ministries of the General Church.

21. Medical Leave

¶652 There shall be a joint committee on medical leave.

- a. Purpose: As set forth in ¶652
- b. Membership:
 1. minimum of two representatives each from the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Board of Pensions
 2. one district superintendent
 3. total of five members

22. Nominations

- a. Purpose: Shall make nominations for members of agencies and for such other positions as conference rules, annual conference structure, or the *Book of Discipline* may direct (¶605.3, and ¶610) and for vacancies that may occur in the same, except where the *Book of Discipline* provides otherwise.
 1. Director of Leadership Formation and Ministry Staff
 2. Director of Discipleship, Leadership and Congregational Vitality
 3. Director of Administrative Services
 4. Conference Lay Leader

5. Conference President of United Methodist Men
6. Conference President of United Methodist Women
7. Chairperson of Conference Council on Youth Ministries
8. Bishop (without vote)
9. Conference Secretary (shall maintain nominations database)
10. one district superintendent
11. nine district representatives
12. eight at-large members (including one youth) with consideration given to inclusiveness as regards age, gender, race, and people with disabling conditions (§653). The bishop shall appoint the membership of any necessary agencies not otherwise provided.

23. Native American Ministries, Committee on

¶654 There shall be an annual conference committee on Native American ministry or other structure.

a. Purpose: To determine the distribution of the Native American Ministries Sunday offering, coordinate the promotion of Native American Ministries Sunday, and monitor Native American ministries within the annual conference.

b. Membership:

1. No less than five, no more than twelve. Where possible, membership should include at least three Native Americans.
2. Care shall be taken to ensure balance of clergy, laity, gender, youth and young adults.
3. Director of Connectional Ministries or their designee (without vote)

24. Older Adult Ministries

¶651 There shall be a conference council on older adult ministries.

a. Purpose: To strengthen older adult ministry in the local churches and districts of the annual conference; to advocate for older adult concerns and issues; to serve in supporting ministries by, with, and for older adults throughout the annual conference and in the communities of the conference; to educate constituencies about the aging population and policy issues.

b. Membership:

1. Chairperson
2. Ten members representing diversity of background (as described in ¶651)
3. Conference Lay Leader or designee
4. one district superintendent

25. Ordained Ministry

¶635 Each annual conference at the first session following the General Conference, shall elect for a term of four years a Board of Ordained ministry.

a. Purpose: As set forth in ¶635 and Section III of the Annual Conference Rules

b. Membership:

1. at least six elders and deacons in full connections
2. at least two associate members or local pastors who have completed Course of Study
3. 1/5th to 1/3 laypersons including diaconal ministers
4. at least one ordained clergy in retired relationship
5. at least one ordained clergy in extension ministry
6. one district superintendent
7. 2/3 members who are elders shall be graduates of seminaries listed by the University Senate

c. This agency shall relate to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

26. Pensions (Pension Funds, Inc.)

¶ 639 There shall be organized in each annual conference a conference board, auxiliary to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, to be known as the conference board of pensions.

- a. Purpose: Shall have charge of the interests and work of providing for and contributing to the support, relief, assistance, and pensioning of ministers and their families, other church workers, and lay employees of the United Methodist Church, its institutions, organization, and agencies within the annual conference, except as otherwise provided for by the General Board.
- b. Membership shall include up to eighteen members. Vacancies may be filled by the agency until the next annual conference session. Tenure begins with adjournment of the annual conference session when elected.
- c. This agency shall relate to the General Board of Pensions.

27. Quadrennial Nominating Committee

- a. Purpose: To function in the third year of the quadrennium in order to nominate persons for election to serve four year terms on Nominations. The new Nominations Committee will begin functioning upon their election at annual conference in the year prior to a new quadrennium.
- b. Membership:
 - 1. a district superintendent named by the bishop to convene the committee
 - 2. Directors of Connectional Ministries
 - 3. Conference Lay Leader
 - 4. Conference Presidents of United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women and Council on Youth Ministries
 - 5. Conference Secretary
 - 6. a district superintendent going off the cabinet (if applicable)
 - 7. a clergy who is ineligible for re-election to nominations
 - 8. a lay man selected by the present nominations committee
 - 9. a lay woman selected by the present nominations committee
 - 10. three additional persons selected by the present nominations committee.

28. Religion and Race

- ¶643. There shall be in each annual conference a conference commission on religion and race.
- a. Purpose: Shall follow the general guidelines and structure of the General Commission on Religion and Race as outlined in ¶¶2002 and 2008 in the *Book of Discipline*.
 - b. Membership:
 - 1. no fewer than eleven members and up to seventeen members
 - 2. at least one representative from each district
 - 3. majority of members be racial and ethnic minority persons
 - 4. Director of Discipleship, Leadership and Congregational Vitality (without vote)
 - c. This agency shall relate to the General Commission on Religion and Race and the General Board of Global Ministries.

29. Rules

- a. Purpose: Shall receive, assemble and edit proposed changes in the organization, structure, procedures, and rules of the annual conference, and present them to the conference with its recommendation, provided, however, that the committee may also initiate proposals for such changes; shall meet at least twice a year with one of the meetings to be held at the Annual Conference session, and additional meetings scheduled at the call of the chairperson. (¶604.1)
- b. Membership:
 - 1. chairperson
 - 2. three clergy members
 - 3. three lay members
 - 4. Conference Secretary (without vote)

30. Sexual Ethics Team

- a. Purpose: To be the first response to persons having concerns regarding sexual misconduct; to provide a trained resource for the Bishop and Cabinet; to provide a support person for a person bringing a concern; and to provide a support person for those who are accused of misconduct. To develop trained leaders who will provide sexual ethics, boundary, and relationship training to clergy and laity in the Annual Conference and to ensure that training is offered at least once a year in cooperation with the Cabinet. To provide oversight of the Conference Child Protection Policy, and procedures and training related to that policy. To nominate the Child Protection Clearing House Coordinator.
- b. Membership:
 - 1. chairperson selected by the bishop
 - 2. eighteen persons nominated by the bishop and elected by the Annual Conference
 - 3. at least two persons from each district
- c. Reference: West Virginia Conference Sexual Ethics Policies and Procedures, page 293, 2009 *Journal*.

31. Trustees

¶640 Each annual conference shall have a board of trustees.

- a. Purpose: Duties as set forth in ¶2512
- b. Membership shall consist of twelve members. Vacancies between annual conference sessions are filled until the next annual conference session on nomination by the agency and election by district superintendents. The annual conference then elects to fill the unexpired term.

32. United Methodist Women

¶647 There shall be a conference organization named United Methodist Women, auxiliary to the jurisdictional organization of United Methodist Women and the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries. Constitution as defined in the *Book of Discipline*.

33. United Methodist Men

¶648 There shall be a conference organization named United Methodist Men, auxiliary to the jurisdictional committee on United Methodist Men and to the General Commission on United Methodist Men (¶2301). Constitution as defined in the *Book of Discipline*.

34. United Methodist Youth

¶649 There shall be a conference council on youth ministry.

- a. Purpose: To strengthen the youth ministry in the local churches and districts of the annual conference.
- b. Membership:
 - 1. as outlined in ¶649.2 and in the Constitution of WVAC CCYM.
 - 2. Conference Youth Coordinator.
 - 3. Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries (without vote)
- c. This agency shall relate to the Discipleship Ministries of the General Church.

35. Vision Accountability Team

- a. Purpose: Shall be responsible to function as a listener and advisor to the Covenant Council so as to insure accountability to the vision and attentiveness to emerging issues in the church and the world.
- b. Membership:
 - 1. Bishop (with voice and no vote)
 - 2. Conference Lay Leader
 - 3. four to six persons, not members of the Covenant Council, selected by the bishop and the Conference Lay leader

36. Young Adult Ministries

¶650 There shall be a conference council on young adult ministry or equivalent structure.

- a. Purpose: To strengthen young adult ministry in the local churches and districts of the annual conference; to advocate for matters that are important to young adults, to take

- responsibility for conference-level young adult ministries.
- b. Membership:
 1. chairperson who is a young adult
 2. ten young adult members-at-large nominated by the Nominations Team, at least half of which are lay persons
 3. one district superintendent (without vote)
 4. All young adult members shall be young adult ages 18-35 and as otherwise defined by *The Book of Discipline*, at the time of their election and shall be professing members of The United Methodist Church.
 5. Terms shall be for one quadrennium and persons may be re-elected provided they are young adults at the time of subsequent election.

III. RULES RELATING TO LICENSED AND ORDAINED MINISTRY

1. Rules. All rules relating to licensed and ordained ministry shall be presented to and voted on by an executive session of the clergy of the annual conference prior to being presented to and voted on by a plenary session of the annual conference. The voting response of the executive session shall be reported to the plenary session of the annual conference by the conference Rules Committee.

2. The Candidacy Process. (§§310, 311, 312) There shall be a three-year time limitation for persons to complete exploration and declared phases of the candidacy process (from the date of assignment of the Candidacy Mentor by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry to date of certification by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry). Each certified candidate for ministry shall have a yearly interview with the District Committee on Ordained Ministry.

3. Pastoral Ministry Licensing Schools. The Conference Board of Ordained Ministry shall be authorized to develop and conduct Pastoral Ministry Licensing Schools for the West Virginia Annual Conference. All non-provisional members of the annual conference who are candidates for licensing shall attend the West Virginia Annual Conference Pastoral Ministry Licensing School unless permission is given by the executive committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry at the request of the cabinet. A person seeking a license under the provisions of §§311 and §315 must have completed the requirements for candidacy and been certified as a candidate for ordained ministry by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry in order to be eligible to attend Pastoral Ministry Licensing School. (Additional requirements and provisions for licensing can be found in the *Book of Discipline*, §§312, 316, 317 & 319)

4. Associate Membership. Pre-requisites for associate membership shall include the completion of a minimum of 60 hours from a college or university recognized by the University Senate, in addition to any hours gained from evaluative programs; no more than 50% of their classes may be taken by correspondence or on-line. The 60 classroom hours shall include at least 12 semester hours in English composition and literature, six in philosophy and/or religion, six in sociology, three in natural sciences and three in speech or public speaking. (§322).

5. Pastors. Persons appointed for the first time as local pastors shall complete the first year requirements of the Course of Study school within 18 months of that appointment. Pastoral charges shall allow local pastors who are under new appointments to attend the Course of Study school in the first and subsequent years of appointment so they can comply with requirements of (§319.1 and §319.2.) and this rule. Local pastors who have completed the Course of Study shall follow the appropriate guidelines for continuing formation. A bachelor's degree or equivalent degree from a college or university approved by the University Senate shall be completed before conference scholarship funds are available for graduate theological study or advanced Course of Study.

6. Ordained Elders In Full Connection. Pre-requisites for elders in full connection with the West Virginia Annual Conference shall include a Master of Divinity or equivalent first professional degree, from a school of theology approved by the University Senate. For those on a degree track no more than 66 2/3% of their classes may be taken by correspondence or on-line. Classes required by the

Board of Ordained Ministry include: Old Testament; New Testament; theology; church history; mission of the church in the world; worship/liturgy; evangelism; United Methodist doctrine, polity, and history; preaching; pastoral care; and church administration, provided, however, that classes in preaching and pastoral care may not be taken in correspondence or on-line format. Associate members may request to be approved by the Board of Ordained Ministry, in consultation with the cabinet, to enter the advanced Course of Study in preparation for the process leading to provisional membership and the possibility of being admitted to membership in full connection without a Master of Divinity degree. Associate members seeking full membership and who are moving toward ordination as elder, shall follow ¶322.4 with the addition of a bachelor's degree from an approved college or university. Associate members or local pastors who are moving toward ordination as elder provided by ¶324.6 shall have completed a bachelor's degree or equivalent degree from a college or university recognized by the University Senate before beginning their graduate theological studies or its equivalent.

7. Order of Elders Coordinating Committee - Appointment and Term

a. The Order of Elders shall, at the first session following the General Conference, elect an Order of Elders Coordinating Committee, consisting of a number of elders equal to twice the number of districts in the Annual Conference and such additional at-large members nominated by the Bishop to enhance the committee's inclusiveness, for a term of four years. This Coordinating Committee shall be directly amenable to the Order of Elders, notwithstanding its organizational relationship within any other agency of the annual conference. Each member shall be an elder in full connection. The Bishop shall nominate members after consultation with the chairperson of the coordinating committee, the executive committee of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and the cabinet. An elected member of the coordinating committee may serve a maximum of three consecutive four-year terms. (The provisions of this paragraph basically follow the procedure for appointment and terms, as provided in ¶635, for the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.)

b. The chairperson of the coordinating committee shall be a member of the coordinating committee, and shall serve as a member of the Board of Ordained Ministry and its executive committee. (As specified by ¶¶308, 635) The chairperson shall be nominated by the Board of Ordained Ministry, after consultation with the membership of the coordinating committee prior to the quadrennial annual conference at which new officers are elected, and elected quadrennially by the Order of Elders (¶308).

c. In response to, and furtherance of, God's covenantal order, and in conformance with those purposes set forth in ¶¶305-309, the Order of Elders coordinating committee shall have the following responsibilities and authorities:

(1) To resource the members of the order in remembering, developing, and strengthening the distinctive nature of their ordination, as servant leaders of the church.

(2) To resource, facilitate and promote elders' recognition of and full participation in the "blessedness of the connection" which is a unique and dynamic cornerstone of United Methodism.

(3) To resource, facilitate, and promote the imperatives of spiritual direction, development, and discipline within the order.

(a) In the event that the conference does appoint a conference spiritual life director(s) (or persons(s) to like or similar position(s) the coordinating committee shall consult with the bishop and other appropriate conference leaders regarding the appointment and continuing work of this conference spiritual life director(s) (or persons(s) to like or similar position(s).

(b) In the event that a conference spiritual renewal retreat center for clergy is developed, the coordinating committee shall actively participate in its formation and ongoing ministry.

(4) To represent the order in consultation with the bishop, cabinet, and Conference Board of Ordained Ministry regarding matters of spiritual development, concerns within the appointment system, the evolving understanding of itinerancy, and the well-being of the order.

(5) To actively seek improved communications and meaningful covenantal relationships among elders, in order to enhance awareness of their needs and to facilitate development, understanding and representation on behalf of the order.

(6) To represent the order to the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry; and to present to the board, consistent with applicable conference budgeting procedures, the financial needs of the coordinating committee, for inclusion in the budget of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

8. Residency Program. All provisional members shall be a part of the residency program during the first three years of provisional membership which follow the completion of the educational requirements for full connection. The residency program will count as continuing formation.

9. Recognition of Orders From Other Denominations. Persons transferring from other Christian denominations and holding credentials or ordination, may have them recognized and approved by the members in full connection, as deacons or elders, on recommendation of the Board of Ordained Ministry. Orders determined to be equivalent to deacon's or elders orders in The United Methodist Church, regardless of the nomenclature and privileges granted by other denominations in question, shall be limited to the rights and privileges granted to the order for which they are approved under the authority of our *Book of Discipline*.

10. Continuing Formation. All full, provisional and associate members of the annual conference, who are in an effective relationship with the annual conference, and full-time local pastors who have completed the Course of Study, shall be granted at least one week each year and at least one month each quadrennium for continuing formation. Such leaves shall not be considered as part of the clergy person's vacation (§350.2). In addition, all full, provisional and associate members who are in an effective relationship with the annual conference, and full time local pastors who have completed the Course of Study shall be required to participate in and complete 4 CEU's of continuing formation (or its equivalent of 40 contact hours) every two years under the accountability of the Board of Ordained Ministry, and the Order of Deacons, Order of Elders or the Fellowship of Associate Members and Local Pastors. Certificates of completion are required.

11. District Committee on Ordained Ministry. When possible, a minimum of one and a maximum of two associate members or local pastors who have completed the Course of Study shall be included as members of each District Committee on Ordained Ministry. A quorum for all District Committees on Ordained Ministry shall consist of fifty percent of those persons eligible to vote.

12. Vacation. All full members of the annual conference, provisional members, associate members and full-time local pastors who have completed the Course of Study school shall be entitled to four weeks' vacation with pay (four Sundays), each appointive year (July 1-July 1). Student local pastors, part-time local pastors, and full-time local pastors who have not completed the Course of Study school shall be entitled to two weeks (two Sundays).

13. Parsonage. A parsonage shall be provided for each active pastor serving a charge as elder, associate member, provisional member moving toward ordination as an elder, and full-time local pastor. Each is required to live in a parsonage unless permission to live elsewhere has been granted by the cabinet. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted by the cabinet after consultation with the Pastor-Parish Relations committee of the involved church or charge. A retired pastor serving full time shall also have the option of living in a parsonage.

14. Mentoring Program. The Conference Board of Ordained Ministry shall oversee a mentoring program for local pastors and provisional members.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS STANDING RULES OF THE CONFERENCE

1. Election of Trustees for West Virginia Wesleyan College. The Board of Trustees shall consist of not more than twenty (20) elected members. In addition, the Board of Trustees shall include the President of the College, the Bishop of the West Virginia Area of the United Methodist Church,

the President of the Alumni Association, the President of Faculty Council and the President of the Staff Council and the President of the Student Senate all of whom shall be ex officio members of the Board, with vote.

Members of the Board of Trustees shall be elected by the West Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church at its regular annual session in accordance with ¶634.4.C.3. Persons shall be nominated by a Special Nominating Committee whose recommendation shall be reported to the Annual Conference Nominating Committee. The Special Nominating Committee shall include the resident Bishop of the West Virginia Area of the United Methodist Church who shall serve as chairperson; the President of West Virginia Wesleyan College; the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of West Virginia Wesleyan College; and two persons appointed jointly by the resident Bishop and the Chairperson of the Board, including a clergy person in Full Connection with the West Virginia Annual Conference, and a lay person who is a member of a local church within the bounds of the West Virginia Annual Conference. The latter two persons shall be members of the Board of Trustees. Trustees shall be of legal age as determined by Civil Law.

2. **Statistical Reports.** Statistical reports from pastoral charges to the Annual Conference shall be filed by January 31st of each year.

3. **Beneficiary of Conference Funds.** No beneficiary of any appropriation from Conference funds shall have a vote upon the same in any agency.

4. **District Committee on Nominations.** In each District there may be a Committee on Nominations which may consist of the District Superintendent (as chairperson); the District Lay Leader; four clergy persons appointed annually by the District Superintendent; and four lay persons appointed annually by the District Lay Leader.

5. **Election of Lay Members Required by ¶32, Book of Discipline.** Each District Superintendent and each District Lay Leader shall annually select one layperson between the ages of twelve (12) and seventeen (17) and one layperson between the ages of eighteen (18) and (30) as a member of Conference.

6. **Equalization of Lay and Clergy Membership.** The Annual Conference Secretary shall annually review the number of clergy and lay members of the Annual Conference, based on information in the most recent *Conference Journal*, and determine the number of additional lay members required to be in compliance with ¶¶32 & 602.4. The Secretary shall determine the number of additional lay members required for equalization and select and notify these equalization members according to priorities of sequence in the following list:

- a. The Conference Secretary and the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services.
- b. Lay persons serving on General Church Agencies.
- c. Lay persons employed as Director or Associate Directors of Office of Connectional Ministries.
- d. Lay persons who chair conference agencies including those who are elected to chair sections or divisions.
- e. Church and Community Workers.
- f. The Conference Chancellor.
- g. The President of West Virginia Wesleyan College. (If a member of the United Methodist Church)
- h. All lay persons serving on the following Conference Agencies: Nominations, Program, Rules, and nine youth between the ages of 15 and 18 to be selected by the Conference Council on Youth Ministries.
- i. All lay persons serving on the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, Conference Council on Finance & Administration and Conference Covenant Council.
- j. All lay persons serving as the chairperson of a District Council on Ministry or equivalent structure.

- k. All lay persons employed as Directors of Conference Health and Welfare institutions and Mission Projects (if a member of The United Methodist Church).
- l. Certified Lay Minister under assignment
- m. A West Virginia Wesleyan College student who is a young adult as determined by the Discipline. The student shall be a member of The United Methodist Church in the WV Annual Conference, familiar with the multi-faceted nature of the Campus Community and representative of the diversity of the student body. The student shall be named by the Dean of the Chapel in consultation with the Community Council President and President of the College.
- n. Additional persons selected by the Parish Coordinators in each district upon nomination by the District Committee on Nominations (or equivalent structure), after the Conference Secretary has informed the District Superintendents of the appropriate number per district.

The Committee on Annual Conference Program, in consultation with the Council on Finance and Administration, shall assist with expenses of equalization members and shall determine the amount of the stipend each year. Funds will not be provided for attendance at one-day special sessions.

7. **Membership on Agencies.** The term of membership begins with the adjournment of the Annual Conference session and shall be for a term of four years or until a successor is elected unless otherwise specified by the agency description.

- a. The Conference Nominations Team shall nominate the chairperson of each of the following: Archives and History, Camping and Outdoor Ministry, Christian Unity, Clergy Support and Pastoral Care, Communications, Congregational Development, Evangelism, Equitable Compensation, Global Ministries, Higher Education and Campus Ministry, Justice and Advocacy, Nominations, Older Adult Ministries, Rules, and Young Adult Ministries..

When there is a vacancy in the chair of an agency listed above, the vacancy shall be reported within 15 days to the Committee on Nominations. The Committee on Nominations will select a new chairperson to serve until Annual Conference and at such time the person will be nominated to be elected to fill the unexpired term of the Chairperson.

The following agencies elect their own chairperson at the first meeting of the quadrennium and fill their own vacancies of chairperson when needed: Episcopacy, Finance and Administration, Ordained Ministry, Religion and Race, Pensions, and Trustees.

- b. No elected member may serve on any Conference Agency for more than eight (8) consecutive years. The regulation shall apply so as to count the years of service or any component when determining eligibility for membership on any agency.
- c. Members of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and Order of Elders Coordinating Committee may serve a maximum of three consecutive four-year terms. ¶(635)
- d. A person having served on any agency and having been removed from the same shall not be eligible to return to membership on that agency until a period of four (4) years has elapsed.
- e. One half of the membership of any agency shall expire at the end of each quadrennium. All elected members of agencies, who have served more than four years, will be ineligible for election as members for the period of the ensuing quadrennium. Membership shall be listed by date of election.
- f. All clergy members of the Annual Conference and local pastors serving charges are eligible to serve on conference agencies as clergy members, except where there may be Disciplinary prohibitions.

- g. Membership on all Agencies shall be open to all lay members of the United Methodist Church within the Annual Conference.
- h. When an officer of a conference organization is specifically named to membership on a conference agency, that person may designate another person to represent him/her in his/her absence with full rights of membership.
- i. When notified by an agency chairperson that a vacancy has been created within an agency between sessions of the Annual Conference, except for Annual Conference Program, Episcopacy Committee (if selected by the Bishop), and Ordained Ministry, the Committee on Nominations shall select a person to fill the unexpired term subject to confirmation by the next session of the annual conference. On all agencies, if members are absent from two consecutive meetings without notifying the agency to be excused, they shall cease to be members thereof. In that case they shall be notified and their place shall be filled by the Committee on Nominations, unless otherwise provided for in the *Book of Discipline*.
- j. It is to be understood that each person shall be contacted in advance of nomination to any conference board or agency to ascertain whether he/she is willing to serve. No name shall be presented of any person who has not indicated willingness to accept election.

8. **District Conference.** [*Book of Discipline* ¶42, 656 -669] District Conferences shall be held annually in each district of the Conference. In addition to the ex-officio membership, each Charge Conference shall elect two principal and two reserve delegates. The ex-officio membership of the District Conference shall be composed of the following: All clergy of the district: including retired, those under disability, maternity leave, leave of absence, or sabbatical leave —associate, provisional, diaconal and local; the deaconesses of the district; District personnel, as listed: district trustees, district lay leader and associate lay leaders, chairperson of the District Board of Laity, chairperson of the District Council or equivalent structure, presidents of the District United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, and District Council of United Methodist Youth Ministries.

Local church personnel as listed (from local churches within the district): lay members of the Annual Conference, church lay leader, chairperson of Church Council, presidents of United Methodist Women, chartered United Methodist Men, and United Methodist Youth Fellowship. A current and accurate report of all elected officers and committee chairpersons shall be submitted to the WV Conference office. The report shall include name and current contact information.

Each District Conference, at the first session following General Conference, shall elect for a term of four (4) years, a District Lay Leader. The term of office shall be subject to the two-quadrennium rule.

9. **Election of Lay Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences.** (¶34) Lay delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences shall be elected by the following process:

- a. Nominations
 - (1) Nominations of Lay Delegates shall be made at the Annual Conference one year prior to the year of election. Nominations shall be made only from the Bar of the Conference. Only lay members may make nominations for lay delegates.
 - (2) At the session of the Annual Conference prior to the General Conference additional nominations can be made.
- b. Editing Committee
 - (1) There shall be an Editing Committee consisting of the Conference Secretary, Conference Lay Leader, and Conference Presidents of Men, Women, Young Adults, and Youth. The Conference Secretary shall be chairperson of the Committee.
 - (2) This committee shall develop a pertinent Personal Data Sheet and forward it to all nominees no later than November 1st, of the year prior to the year of election, with the request that it be filled out and returned to the Chairperson no later than January 1st, of the year prior to General and Jurisdictional Conferences. The personal data sheet may include a statement of 50 words or fewer describing what the nominee would contribute as a delegate.

- (3) Personal data information shall be assembled by the committee with the nominees listed in alphabetical order. This information shall be distributed to all Annual Conference lay members with the *Conference Workbook*.
- c. Voting Procedure
 - (1) Tellers shall be elected by the Annual Conference, on nomination by the District Superintendents and presentation by the Secretary of the Annual Conference.
 - (2) All ballots shall contain the exact number called for on that specific ballot. A ballot will be considered invalid if it:
 - (a) Contains more or fewer names than persons to be elected.
 - (b) Contains name(s) of persons already elected.
 - (c) Contains name(s) of persons ineligible to be elected.
 - (3) When reporting the results of each ballot to the session of the Annual Conference, the head teller and/or Conference Secretary shall read the names of all persons receiving ten or more votes on the first ballot; fifteen or more votes on the second ballot; twenty or more on the third and all succeeding ballots. The names shall be read in descending numerical order indicating the number of votes received.
 - (4) The results of each preceding ballot, and any qualifying factors related to the preparation of the next ballot, shall be announced by the presiding officer, or person designated by him/her, before voting continues.
 - (5) Delegates will be elected by the majority of valid votes cast.

10. Election of Clergy Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences (§34) Clergy delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences shall be elected by the following process.

- a. All clergy members of this annual conference in full connection shall be eligible for election to General and Jurisdictional Conferences (§35). In the year prior to election to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, the clergy members will be encouraged to provide, in writing, names about whom biographical information would be desired. Names shall be printed and returned to the designated location prior to the adjournment of Annual Conference.

b. Data Collection Committee

- (1) There shall be a Data Collection Committee consisting of the Conference Secretary, who shall be the convener; one clergy representative from each of the following: Rules Committee (appointed by Chair), Order of Deacons, Order of Elders, and Fellowship of Associate Members and Local Pastors.
 - (2) This Committee shall develop a Personal Data Sheet and forward it to all nominees no later than November 1st of the year prior to the year of election, with the request that it be completed and returned to the Convener no later than January 1st of the year prior to General and Jurisdictional Conferences. The Personal Data Sheet fields shall include, but not be limited to: name, clergy status, address, current appointment, phone number, email address, district, and previous General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference experience. The personal data sheet may include a statement of 50 words or less describing what the nominee would contribute as a delegate.
 - (3) Personal data information shall be assembled by the Data Collection Committee with the nominees listed in alphabetical order. The information collected shall be available to all clergy members prior to Annual Conference.
- c. Voting Procedure
- (1) Tellers shall be elected by the Annual Conference, on nomination by the District Superintendents and presentation by the Secretary of the Annual Conference.

- (2) All ballots shall contain the exact number called for on that specific ballot. A ballot will be considered invalid if it:
 - (a) Contains more or fewer names than persons to be elected.
 - (b) Contains name(s) of persons already elected.
 - (c) Contains name(s) of persons ineligible to be elected.
- (3) When reporting the results of each ballot to the session of the Annual Conference, the head teller and/or Conference Secretary shall read the names of all persons receiving ten or more votes on the first ballot; fifteen or more votes on the second ballot; twenty or more on the third and all succeeding ballots. The names shall be read in descending numerical order indicating the number of votes received.
- (4) The results of each preceding ballot, and any qualifying factors related to the preparation of the next ballot, shall be announced by the presiding officer, or person designated by him/her, before voting continues.
- (5) Delegates will be elected by the majority of valid votes cast.

11. Procedure For Episcopal Endorsement and Nomination. In order that an Episcopal candidate might be endorsed by the West Virginia Annual Conference, the delegation to the Jurisdictional Conference shall meet together at their mutual convenience prior to the Annual Conference immediately preceding the Jurisdictional Conference. At that time, the delegates may in private session, and after prayerful consideration, select a candidate for endorsement.

Viable candidates shall be identified by written ballot, with no speeches being given by or on behalf of any prospective candidate. There shall be one vote per delegate. Balloting shall continue until one or more persons receive 25% of the votes of those present and voting.

Those persons receiving 25% or more of the votes shall be interviewed by the delegation with a layperson, selected by the delegation, presiding. Care shall be given to the development of key issues to be addressed by each person interviewed. Decision concerning length or time for interviews shall be determined by the delegation.

At the close of the interviewing process, written ballots shall be taken until one Episcopal candidate receives at least 60% of the votes cast or the delegation decides to end the process.

The delegation shall place the name of the endorsed person before the Annual Conference at the session immediately prior to the session of the Jurisdictional Conference, for formal nomination as the Episcopal candidate with the disciplinary privilege of nomination from the floor.

Only one Episcopal nominee shall be chosen. The Conference shall elect by written ballot. A majority of ballots cast shall be needed to elect. Balloting shall continue for no more than three (3) ballots. If no person has received a majority after the third ballot, the process shall cease.

12. Election of Conference Secretary of Global Ministries. The Annual Conference, on nomination by the conference global ministries agency, shall elect annually a Conference Secretary of Global Ministries, to be publicly assigned by the Bishop. This Secretary shall promote the policies and plans of the Board of Global Ministries, and shall be its representative in the Conference. The Conference Secretary of Global Ministries shall work in full cooperation with the Director of the Annual Conference Connectional Ministries.

13. Annual Conference Budget Process. The Council on Finance and Administration sets the overall budget parameter for the calendar year budget and will inform the agencies, boards and teams of the Annual Conference. The Treasurer's office will provide historical year information for teams and boards. The Director of Administrative Services sends all information and budget materials to agencies in Category I & III. The Director of Connectional Ministries sends all information and budget materials to Category II boards and teams. Category II budget is proposed by the Covenant Council to CF&A after a budget review is done and the proposed budget is adopted by the Covenant Council in its Spring meeting. All proposed budgets for the new calendar year are due to the Treasurer's office by March 1. The CF&A adopts the proposed budget for recommendation to the Annual Conference and includes the proposed budget in the *Conference Workbook* published for Annual Conference.

14. **Printed Materials.** Lay and clergy members of the Annual Conference shall be given an opportunity to read all reports, recommendations, resolutions, and other supporting material for agenda items prior to their presentation at the Session. All such materials shall be submitted to the Annual Conference Secretary by April 1st each year and a *Conference Workbook* mailed by May 1st. Each item submitted for the *Conference Workbook* shall be clearly identified as to authorship. Items requiring Conference Action not printed in the *Conference Workbook* shall be assigned a document number by the Annual Conference Secretary, printed at the expense of the presenter, and distributed at the time of registration or 12 hours prior to presentation. The standard format for documents shall be 8 ½" x 11" paper, punched for three ring binder. Items not requiring Conference Action are to be received by the Annual Conference Secretary by June 1. These items will be placed in a Conference publicity packet that will be distributed at registration. These items will be printed at the expense of the presenter. Motions from the floor, including amendments, shall be presented to the Annual Conference Secretary in writing. Only those reports, resolutions and recommendations requiring Annual Conference action may be distributed within the bar of the Conference. All other material shall be distributed at the place of registration.

15. **Displays.** Display space is available at the place of registration. The assignment of space will be on a priority basis by the Annual Conference Program chairperson. Requests are due by May 15th. Because space may be limited, assignments will be made in the following priority:

- a. Official General and Annual Conference Boards and Agencies, approved Conference Advance Specials, and approved ministries and foundations of the Annual Conference.
- b. Seminaries.
- c. Official affiliated ministries.
- d. Caucus Groups.

Non-United Methodist entities must apply for approval of the Chairperson of the Annual Conference Program Committee.



Sabella, age 5, shares her five finger prayer she learned at Camp@Home. Each finger reminds her to pray for different people.

2019 Salaries of Those Appointed to Extension Ministries

The following are salaries reported by those in extension ministries as required by the 2016 Book of Discipline, paragraph 628 and the WV Annual Conference Fiscal Policy #32. *“Every clergy member of an annual conference appointed to extension ministry shall furnish annually to the conference secretary ...a statement of compensation...and said compensation of all clergy appointed to extension ministry shall be published in the journal of the annual conference.”*

*Indicates those in compliance with Disciplinary requirement and conference fiscal policy. Where a salary appears without an *, the figures are from the previous year when a report was submitted. This is a list of those appointed to Extension Ministries for the 2019-2020 appointment year.

Appointed to Extension Ministries Within the Connectional Structure of United Methodism

Name	Charge Conference	Salary	Housing	Travel	Other Benefits
*Alt, Angel	Burlington	\$ 35,400	N/A	N/A	N/A
* Coble, Deborah	Buffalo	\$53,844	\$ 9,200	Reimbursed	
* James, Shea	St. Mark’s (Charleston)	\$37,618	\$18,000	Reimbursed	N/A
Lacaria, John F.	Cross Lanes				
*Linger, Michael D.	Simpson Moundsville	\$59,329	\$14,000	\$5,000	N/A
Lipphart, John W.	Christ Church				
* MacDonald, Bonnie G.	Christ, Charleston	\$58,249	\$ 9,200	Reimbursed	N/A
* Nickell, Jane Ellen	First (Buckhannon)	\$65,000	\$ 3,000 (for department)		
* Taylor, Jeffrey A.	Cross Lanes	\$128,330	\$ 25,000	Car Provided	N/A
Weaver, Lauren S.	Quiet Dell				

Appointed to Extension Ministries Endorsed by the Bd. of Higher Education and Ministry

Name	Charge Conference	Salary	Housing	Travel	Other Benefits
* Brumley, Mary E.	Johnson Memorial (Huntington)	\$53,400	\$10,800	\$0	N/A
* Dague, Debra K.	Dallas/Sand Hill	\$40,522	\$ 9,200	\$0	\$1000
Green, Sharletta	Commerce First, Athens, GA				
Isaiah, Ravi J.	St. Andrew (St. Albans)	Report returned. No salary listed.			
* Moon, Jenna	Christ Church, Charleston	\$10,547	N/A	N/A	N/A
* Ployd, Adam	Crossroads	\$58,262(2018)	N/A	\$2000	N/A

Appointed to Other Valid Extension Ministries

Name	Charge Conference	Salary	Housing	Travel	Other Benefits
Allen, Jeffrey Scott	Simpson Mem (Charleston)				
Andrews, Dina	Lubeck				
Carr, Margaret E.	Christ (Wheeling)	\$37,000	N/A	reimbursed	N/A
* File, Ellen	UM Temple (Beckley)	\$45,886	N/A	\$300	N/A
* Flanagan, Janet	Wesley (Morgantown)	\$43,000	N/A	reimbursed	N/A
Godwin, Jeffrey L.	First (Buckhannon)				
Gooding, Kevin L.	Concord				
Sayers, Jennifer	Cornerstone	\$0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
St. Clair, J. William	First (Huntington)	\$45,045	N/A	N/A	N/A
* Taylor, Marcy A.	Suncrest	\$20.74 hourly	N/A	N/A	N/A
* Taylor, Michael E.	McMechen-Benwood	\$32,123	N/A	N/A	N/A
* Waide, Michael P.	Life	\$70,000	N/A	reimbursed	N/A
* Weaver, Eric C.	Wesley Chapel (Short Gap)	\$90,000	N/A	N/A	N/A
West, E. Jay, Jr.	First (Romney)	\$84,272	\$39,000	reimbursed	N/A
Williams, G. Alan	Johnson Memorial (Huntington)				

The Following policy was approved by the 2018 Session of the West Virginia Annual Conference:

The West Virginia Conference Sexual Ethics Policy

What Do We Expect of Church Leaders?

Church leaders should do no harm.

The church is a unique environment in which we expect no harm to be done. The church seeks wholeness and healing, in unity expressed as the Body of Christ. Where such unity prevails, there is no exploitation, no humiliation, and no abuse.

People in a ministerial role will be held accountable.

The ministerial role is one of power and responsibility. Persons called to ministerial roles are expected to dedicate themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life for the sake of the church and the most effective witness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Conduct is as important a witness as the sermons preached, the rites celebrated, the counsel offered, and other church tasks performed. Church leaders, whether clergy or laity, must maintain appropriate sexual boundaries that respect the fact that a power differential exists between them and those whom they serve.

What Is Sexual Misconduct According to The United Methodist Church?

Sexual misconduct is a chargeable offense for both laity and clergy. Chargeable offenses include, but are not limited to: child abuse, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, the use of pornography, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination (The Book of Discipline 2016, par. 2702.1).

Definitions

Sexual misconduct is a continuum of sexual or gender-directed behaviors by either a lay or clergy person within a ministerial relationship (paid or unpaid). It can include child abuse, adult sexual abuse, harassment, rape or sexual assault, sexualized verbal comments or visuals, touching and advances, use of sexualized materials including pornography, stalking, sexual abuse of youth or those without capacity to consent, or misuse of the ministerial position using sexualized conduct to take advantage of the vulnerability of another. Sexualization of the ministerial relationship is a betrayal of sacred trust.

Sexual harassment is “any unwanted sexual comment, advance, or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender.” (*The Book of Discipline 2016, par. 161.1*)

Sexual abuse is a form of sexual misconduct and occurs when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (lay or clergy, pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader, or other position of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, coworker, or volunteer.

Pornography is sexually explicit material that portrays violence, abuse, coercion, domination, humiliation, or degradation for the purpose of arousal. Any sexually explicit material that depicts children is pornographic.

Dating irrevocably alters the relationship between clergy person and parishioner and impacts the congregation. Therefore, dating between clergy and parishioners is inappropriate and is discouraged. Because of vulnerability and power differences within the ministerial relationship, meaningful consent is difficult to establish. Any decision to initiate a dating relationship within this context would require transparency with all involved, including permission from the district superintendent, pastor-parish relations committee, and plans for alternative pastoral support for the person involved.

How Does The United Methodist Church Respond to Sexual Misconduct?

The Book of Discipline sets forth the plan by which we United Methodists govern ourselves. It reflects our understanding of the Church and of what is expected of its laity and clergy as they seek to be effective witnesses in the world as a part of the whole body of Christ. Complaints will be handled according to *The Book of Discipline*. *The Book of Discipline* will not substitute for actions which might be brought in a civil or criminal court. Any person reporting sexual misconduct will be heard with compassion. Appropriate support will be given to the complainant(s), the respondent(s), their families, and the congregation or Conference agency involved.

1. If you feel you are a victim of sexual misconduct within the West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church, you are encouraged to contact one of the following people (contact information may be found below*). If the misconduct involves a/an

- a) Clergy person, contact a District Superintendent or the Bishop.
- b) *Employee or volunteer leader* in a Conference-sponsored activity, contact the Bishop.
- c) *Lay person in a ministerial role*, contact a District Superintendent.
- d) *Lay person in a local church leadership role*, contact your pastor or a District Superintendent.

2. Allegations involving minors or an adult incapable of self-reporting shall be reported to the appropriate government authorities. In WV, a report must be made to the Department of Health and Human Services Hotline (1-800-352-6513, for both children and vulnerable adults). A report must also be made within 24 hours to the state police or a local law enforcement agency with jurisdiction to investigate. In Garrett County, MD, contact Child Protective Services at 301-533-3005. For MD Adult Protective Services, call 800-917-7383. In addition to these reports, the notification procedures described in #1 above and the church's Safe Sanctuary policy shall be followed.

3. Retaliation on account of a good faith report of sexual misconduct shall not be tolerated and shall be considered a separate violation of this policy.

**The Bishop's office and each district superintendent may be contacted through the conference office at 800-788-3746. Direct contact information is elsewhere in the Journal or on the conference website at www.wvumc.org.*

What Support Does the West Virginia Conference Offer to Those Affected by Sexual Misconduct?

A Conference Response Team is named and maintained by the Bishop consisting of persons specially trained to respond as outlined by *The Book of Discipline*. This Team and the Cabinet shall consult and agree upon appropriate case management procedures.

How Will We Help Reduce Sexual Misconduct?

Education and awareness are key elements in the reduction of sexual misconduct and in effective intervention when sexual misconduct occurs. The West Virginia Conference will provide education to clergy and laity in ministerial roles to reduce sexual misconduct.

This education shall include

1. ethical standards of behavior;
2. resources for spiritual, emotional, physical well-being; and
3. a description of the complaint process and resources available to affected individuals and congregations.

Basic education and training shall be required

1. for laypersons in ministerial roles – within six months of employment.
2. for clergy – within six months of initial appointment.

Basic education and training shall be offered to volunteers and non-ministerial employees in the church.

Following completion of basic education, supplemental training on these subjects shall be offered and/or approved by the West Virginia Conference and required both for clergy and laypersons at least every four years while serving in a ministerial role.

Congregations shall

1. become educated about issues related to appropriate boundaries and sexual misconduct;
2. draft, approve and follow a local church policy regarding Sexual Harassment, Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct. Until such a policy has been adopted, the Conference policy and procedures will be in effect for the local church.
3. show concern for the health of the congregation and that of their leaders;
4. be aware of the demands on the time of their ministerial leaders and establish reasonable expectations; and
5. support continuing education, training, consultation, and peer connections for their clergy and lay leaders.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Book of Discipline, Abingdon Press, 2016. A free edition is available from Cokesbury at: www.cokesbury.com/forms/DynamicContent.aspx?id=87&pageid=920
Paragraphs 362 & 2702 detail complaint procedures and chargeable offenses.

Child Abuse reporting information, including a list of mandatory reporters:
www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/manda

ChildHelp national reporting hotline is 1.800.4.A.CHILD (1.800.422.4453)

Local church policies recommendations:
www.umsexualethics.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Local-Church-Policy-Alert-REV.pdf

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence resource list, including a wide variety of national agency resource links relating to abuse: www.ncadv.org/resources

Resources relating to sexual misconduct and healing: 1-800-523-8390 or www.umsexualethics.org

This policy has been adapted, with appreciation, from that of the Susquehanna Conference of the UMC.



Communications Team members were kept busy at Annual Conference 2020

West Virginia Conference Safe Sanctuaries Policy

Introduction

Heeding Christ's call to love and serve one another (John 13:15,34); to care for those most vulnerable in his name, particularly the "least of these" (Matthew 25:40); and to welcome children and youth in Christ's name (Matthew 18:5), the West Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church has developed this *Safe Sanctuaries¹ Policy* with accompanying procedures to reduce the risk of abuse to children, youth and vulnerable adults in the ministries of the local churches and the annual conference.

"People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them, and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly, I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' And he took them in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them." (Mark 10:13-16)

Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to children. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that "children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation and abuse." Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation, and ritual abuse occur in churches, both large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church and its leaders. God calls us to make churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong.

In light of this, the West Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church is committed to creating policy and procedures that can 1) prevent such abuse from happening in our churches; 2) be a place where children can feel safe in disclosing abuse; and 3) protect the loyal volunteers and employees that minister to our children, youth and vulnerable adults.

This policy sets forth the **mandatory** requirements in the areas of:

- Screening Staff and Volunteers
- Supervision
- Cyber Policy
- Reporting Abuse and Responding

The policies that follow provide minimum standards and procedures for local churches and the annual conference that are in keeping with the Book of Discipline and General Conference resolutions (*endnote: 1996 General Conference Safe Sanctuaries resolution, which was reaffirmed in 2004 and 2008, expanded to include abuse risk reduction for vulnerable adults and cyber safety considerations*).

The West Virginia Conference shall:

- develop safety and risk-reducing policies and procedures for Conference-sponsored events such as camps, retreats, youth gatherings, childcare at conference events, mission trips, and other events for which the Conference or its agency or program is the sponsor;

¹ Melton, Joy Thornburg. *Safe Sanctuaries, Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church*. 2008. Discipleship Resources: Nashville, TN

- approve and maintain a Safe Sanctuaries Policy and assign the Sexual Ethics Team for implementation. The Conference Safe Sanctuaries Policy shall be posted on the Conference website, circulated in Conference publications, and shared with lay professional and clergy at district or Conference seminars; and
- develop training opportunities to assist local church leaders in the creation of local church policies and in their implementation.

Local churches should:

- develop a Safe Sanctuaries Policy for their church;
- be familiar with Annual Conference and other church policies regarding clergy and lay leader sexual misconduct; and
- designate a Safe Sanctuaries coordinator and/or team within the local church to ensure policies and procedures are followed.
- adopt screening procedures (use of application forms, interviews, reference checks, background clearances, and so forth) for staff, volunteers, employees, and helpers (paid and unpaid) directly or indirectly involved in the care of children, youth, and vulnerable adults;
- develop and implement procedures for church activities (see Supervision Section)
- become informed as to who are mandatory reporters
- carry liability insurance that includes sexual abuse coverage;
- develop and implement an ongoing education plan for the congregation and its leaders on the reality of child abuse, risk factors leading to child abuse, and strategies for prevention;

The West Virginia Conference Safe Sanctuaries Policy, with its minimum standards and recommended procedures, seeks to assist local churches and conference ministries in their covenant commitments to reduce the risk of abuse in ministries with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

Cyber Space and Cyber Safety

While ministries and activities take place in a variety of venues, new forms of communication via the Internet and cell-phones and other hand-held devices constitute a new space for ministry and activities for children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Cyber Space includes: communications via email, instant messaging, and cell phone (speaking and texting), and other devices; communicating on social networking sites such as Facebook.; web-surfing and downloading of materials from the Internet; and gaming. Cyber Space is a fluid space which changes more and more as communications become more portable and websites change with increasing frequency. The dangers of direct access to age-inappropriate content, risky social contacts, intimidation, threats, bullying, remade and/or inappropriate photos, information that could increase risks for abuse, and more in Cyber Space make Cyber Safety an important part of *Safe Sanctuaries*.

Definitions

What is Safe Sanctuaries?

In 1996, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church adopted the resolution, Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church. This resolution, reaffirmed at every General Conference since then, became the impetus for annual conferences and congregations to develop and implement abuse risk reduction policies. Discipleship Ministries has identified *Safe Sanctuaries* as “*reducing the risk of abuse in the church for children, youth, and vulnerable adults.*”

What is abuse?

Child abuse is a broad term encompassing a variety of acts perpetrated against a child (under 18) by an adult or significantly older or more powerful child that results in harm to the child, or that endangers a child's/youth's health,

safety or welfare. The child or youth is never capable of consenting to abusive behavior, either legally or morally. In all circumstances, child abuse is morally wrong and the child shares no responsibility for the abuse

The Code of Maryland and the West Virginia Code provide legal definitions of acts constituting criminal child abuse.² While we find these definitions informative, we believe the Church must hold itself to a higher standard. Our churches must be the safest and holiest of places for all of God's children/youth if we are to succeed in our efforts to live and serve as the Body of Christ in the world.

Types of abuse

Physical Abuse³—a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a child. Examples may include violent battery with a weapon (knife, belt, strap, etc), burning, shaking, kicking, choking, fracturing bones, and any of a wide variety of non-accidental injuries to a child's body. (pages 29-30)

Emotional Abuse—abuse in which a person exposes a child to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the child of worthlessness, badness, and being not only unloved but undeserving of love and care. Children exposed to emotional abuse may have experienced being locked in a closet, being deprived of any sign of parental affection, being constantly told they are bad or stupid, or being allowed or forced to abuse alcohol or drugs. Emotional abuse is often very difficult to prove and devastating to the victim. (page 30)

Neglect—abuse in which a person endangers a child's health, safety, or welfare through negligence. Neglect may include withholding food, clothing, medical care, education, and even affection and affirmation of the child's self-worth. (page 30) If a parent cannot provide adequate care for a child due to poverty, infirmity, or other disability, their negligence is not legally categorized as abuse, although the child still needs care.

Sexual Abuse—child sexual abuse is a criminal act perpetrated by an adult (or an older and more powerful youth) that exploits and harms children/youth by exposing them to or involving them in sexual behavior for which they are unprepared, to which they cannot consent (either morally or legally), and from which they are unable to protect themselves. The child/youth is never capable of consenting to sexually abusive behavior and cannot be blamed for the sexual abuse regardless of the child's/youth's conduct. Examples of sexual abuse may include fondling, intercourse, incest, and the exploitation of the child/youth for the purpose of or exposure of the child/youth to pornography or prostitution. (page 30)

Ritual Abuse—abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a child are inflicted regularly, intentionally, and in a stylized way by a person or persons responsible for the child's welfare. The abuser may appeal to some higher authority or power to justify the abuse. The abuse may include cruel treatment of animals or repeated threats of harm to the child, other persons, and animals. Reports of ritual abuse are often extremely horrifying and may seem too grim to be true. Children making such reports must not be ignored. (page 30)

Hazing/Initiations/Bullying—abuse that occurs when the child/youth is subjected to ridicule, harassment, or other emotional or physical harm as part of a rite of passage, initiation, punishment, or for the enjoyment of the participants or other bystanders. This type of abuse may be perpetrated by adults or by older or more powerful children or youth. While this type of abuse may not always constitute a crime, it serves no purpose in the Body of Christ and is not acceptable in our church.

² W.Va. Code, §§49-1-3 and 61-8D-1 through 61-8D-6; Maryland Code, §§3-601 through 3-607, 11-203 and 11209.

³ All definitions are from Melton, Joy Thornburg. *Safe Sanctuaries, Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church*. 2008. Discipleship Resources: Nashville, TN

West Virginia Conference Policy Definitions

1. A child is anyone under the age of 18 years.
2. A youth is a child in the age range of 12 to 18 years, and is a colloquial term used in ministries to mean middle and high school age groups.
3. A vulnerable adult is any person, 18 years and older, who because of physical or mental infirmity or emotional disability or other physical, mental, or emotional dysfunction may be vulnerable to maltreatment.
4. Employee – a paid person engaged in ministry to children, youth, or vulnerable adults through the Conference or Local Church who: has been screened and trained in *Safe Sanctuaries Policies*; performs tasks specified in a mutually agreed upon job description; and, is accountable to a supervisor for work habits and products.
5. Helper – a person engaged in ministry to children, youth, or vulnerable adults through the Conference or Local Church who has been screened and trained in *Safe Sanctuaries Policies*, who serves under the supervision of a staff person.
6. Volunteer – a person who works in ministry to children, youth, or vulnerable adults who has been screened and trained in *Safe Sanctuary Policies* either as a supervisor or a helper without compensation.
7. Dean of the event – a person in charge of an activity or event or the Site Director at any of the camping sites the conference owns
8. Conference Response Team – a group of people trained in handling situations of abuse. They assist congregations, camps, and events in dealing with the recovery process.
9. Mandated Reporter - All members of the clergy, employees, child care workers, youth camp administrators or counselors, and volunteers who work with children/youth are mandated reporters (WV Code §49-2-803, 2018)
10. The Conference - the West Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church
11. Ministries or activities- any ministries to children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults that include any programming or activities in which children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults are under the supervision of the Conference through its staff persons or volunteers.

Screening

Every ministry of the West Virginia Conference that relates to children, youth, and vulnerable adults in its programming or oversight shall create procedures for implementing the Conference *Safe Sanctuaries Policies*. Administrative teams of Local Churches and Conference ministries and programs who give oversight to these ministries shall be responsible for implementing and monitoring the compliance of these minimum standard policies and its related procedures.

1. Every ministry and/or program of the West Virginia Conference that relates to children, youth, or vulnerable adults shall have a *Safe Sanctuaries Policies*. These policies and procedures are required for Annual Conference ministries and shall include:
 - a. Reasonable safety measures and procedures in the selection and recruitment of both paid and volunteer workers who come in contact with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults, which shall include:
 - Written application (sample provided).
 - Experience and qualification for the position.
 - Voluntary disclosure of past criminal history, allegations of criminal history, and driver history.
 - Waiver of confidentiality allowing the conference to secure the background checks necessary for the position being applied for.
 - Listing of three non-related references. This list shall have complete contact information for all references. This portion of the application process is considered incomplete if full contact information for the references is not provided.
 - An interview processes.

- All employees and volunteers need to complete the following background screening including:
 - o West Virginia State Police Criminal Background Clearance
 - o National Criminal with Sex Offender OFAC
- Background clearances are valid for 60 months and must be obtained again after every 60 months.
- A current driver's license, registration, insurance, and completed West Virginia/Maryland or state of residency, driving record, when transporting children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults.
- Demonstration of an active relationship with a local church of at least six (6) months before being allowed to be in a supervisory role in children, youth, and/or vulnerable adult activities.
- Use of age and developmentally appropriate language in educating children, youth, and vulnerable adults regarding definitions of abuse and procedures for reporting.
- b. All forms and reference reports shall be kept as a part of the person's file.
- c. There shall be a specific person designated to be responsible for reviewing and following up on each application prior to service. All applications and related forms must be completed.
- d. In the event that a reference follow-up is accomplished by phone, use of the Reference Check Form is recommended and should be included in the persons file.
- e. All records shall be kept in a locked file within the Conference Office. Access will be authorized by the chairs of the Response Team, Sexual Ethics Team, and the Cabinet. *All records should be securely kept, with confidential access.*
- f. When the Conference is hosting an event for which the local church is responsible for chaperones, the church shall provide the necessary paperwork listed above.
- g. A method for reporting incidents of child, youth, and vulnerable adult abuse in accordance with the State Laws of West Virginia and Maryland; the written guidelines of the West Virginia Conference, and the written guidelines of the local United Methodist Church.
- h. Measures to deal with the safety, protection, and ongoing emotional support of those who may have been abused.
- i. Guidelines for communication with family members, the congregation, the district, the conference, and the public media.
- j. Persons responsible for implementing, monitoring, and reviewing local church policies include but are not limited to: Pastor; Representative of Staff Parish, Representative of Trustees, Youth Leader, Children's Leader, Nursery Leader, Child Protection Coordinator.
- k. A copy of Local Church *Safe Sanctuaries Policies* shall be on file in the appropriate District Office or the Conference Office.
- l. If a local church does not act on creating their own Safe Sanctuaries policy, the Conference policy serves as the policy for the church.
- m. The Conference Sexual Ethics Team shall be responsible for training and resourcing the ministries and local churches covered by their *Safe Sanctuaries Policies*.
- n. *Safe Sanctuaries* training is required of all persons serving congregations within six months of their first appointment or assignment in the annual conference. The report of completion of this training shall be included with Charge Conference reports.
- o. Clergy and lay persons serving congregations are required to attend *Safe Sanctuaries* training events mandated by the conference at least every 60 months (five years.)

Supervision

Every ministry or event of the West Virginia Conference that relates to children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults shall follow these standards for supervision. These procedures are designed to reduce the risk of abuse to children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults, and to protect the staff persons and volunteers from unwarranted accusations. These are the MINIMUM standards, and each event may adopt more stringent requirements as deemed reasonably appropriate.

1. **Two non-related Adult Rule** –No matter the size of the group, a minimum of two nonrelated adults age 18 or older (defined as two adults not residing in the same household) shall be present with participants at all times. These adults shall have completed the screening process. One of the two adults may be a “roamer” who moves in and out of the rooms.
2. **Five-Years-Older Rule** – Every adult responsible for supervision shall be at least 18 years of age and at least five years older than the oldest child or youth event participant.
3. **No child, youth, or vulnerable adult will be left unsupervised** while attending a West Virginia Conference sponsored event. In the event that child care/supervision services are not provided by the conference for a conference sponsored ministry or event (i.e. retreats, small groups, worship services, etc.), the parent or legal guardian shall be fully responsible for their child(ren) during the event.
4. **All activities should occur in open view.** Each room or space where activities involving children, youth or vulnerable adults occur shall have visibility from an interior hallway or a connecting room by means of a window, a door with an uncovered window, or an open door. Parents, volunteers, or local church staff may visit and observe any part of any program at any time.
5. **Bathroom Needs.** When possible, children will be encouraged to take care of their own bathroom needs, but should a child require assistance, the outer bathroom door will remain open while a volunteer or staff person assists the child, with an additional volunteer being present. It is recommended that youth use a buddy system to ensure safety.
6. **Event records** are required for activities in which participants are outside of the direct supervision of their parents/legal guardians.
7. **Media** – Written permission must be obtained from a parent/legal guardian prior to posting photos of children, youth, or vulnerable adults on a website or in other public locations, and names will not be included.
8. **Overnight Events-** For overnight children/youth/vulnerable adult events:
 - i. There will be separate sleeping areas for males and females.
 - ii. At least two adults will be present in each sleeping area and will be of the same gender as the children/youth/vulnerable adult in that area.
 - iii. Sleeping areas should be pre-arranged by staff person or event coordinator prior to event.
 - iv. Random and regular rounds will be conducted by two (2) adult leaders throughout the nighttime sleeping hours of all sleeping areas.
 - v. Separate shower and bathrooms facilities are highly encouraged. When separate facilities are not possible, procedures for use of the facility will be conveyed to all event participants by the staff person or event coordinator.

Adults must respect the privacy of children/youth/vulnerable adult, during such situations as changing, showering, etc., and should intrude only to the extent that health or safety may require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations as well.

Cyber Safety Electronic Communication Recommendations

The internet, apps, social media and portable devices allow people to stay in contact with each other more easily than at any other time in the history of civilization. Excellent ministry can take place using modern technology, but as with all forms of ministry, there are inherent risks involved with the use of electronic communications. **Assume anything and everything in cyberspace is public information.** Here are some recommendations.

- **Obtain advance written parent/legal guardian permission.** In addition to general permission to participate in a conference ministry or event, obtain written advance parent/legal guardian permission for children and youths, and personal permission from vulnerable adults or their guardian if applicable, for:
 1. Taking and using photos or videos of participants, for example, posting on sites, sending by e-mail or by cell phone, reproducing photos in brochures, posters or newspapers.
 2. Communicating or transmitting data electronically with children, youths or vulnerable adults sharing any full name or contact information.
- **Never post identifiable information. For example:**
 1. Do not use “broadcast” emails. Use the “Bcc” option (blind carbon copy) so that each recipient sees only his or her address when a message is received.
 2. Be cautious when transmitting easily identifiable information such as event dates, times, locations, or participants.
 3. Limit what is communicated in prayer requests. When placing a child, youth, or vulnerable adult on a prayer list, use only first names and only if you think a name is necessary.
- **Use caution when sharing photos.**
 3. Consider using stock or purchased photos.
 4. Obtain all necessary legal permission to use photos or other content (poems, songs, etc.).
 5. If sharing photos, refrain from using names, and never use last names or other personally identifiable information.
 6. Check photos for vulnerable/compromising situations and to make sure they uphold your mission.
 7. Check to make sure nametags are not distinguishable.
 8. Block "save photo as" options on websites.
 9. Limit access to photos by employing the use of a password.
- **Social media sites (Facebook, Blogs etc.)** Do not use your personal social media presence for ministry. Use a group social media site that is monitored by senior leadership, for example a Facebook site for the specific group.
 10. Include a code of conduct/terms and conditions for the site that expressly states expectations for posts and a clear expression of how violations, offensive and objectionable material will be addressed.
 11. Monitor the site and remove inappropriate comments, photos, links, etc.
 12. Restrict who can be a friend.
 13. Do not post anything that you would not want printed in the newspaper, church newsletter or bulletin.
 14. Be familiar with, and comply with, social media provider policies, restrictions and terms and conditions. For example, according to Facebook’s own terms, children under 13 years of age may not sign up for a Facebook account.
 15. Encourage children, youths, and vulnerable adults to follow these same guidelines as appropriate.
- **Do not collect online, or allow third parties to collect online, personal information from children under the age of 13. See Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (“COPPA”) and Federal Trade Commission Rules implementing COPPA (the "Rule").** COPPA and the Rule require specific permissions and privacy policies if a website or online service collects, or allows third parties to collect, personal information if the service is directed to children under the age of 13. Restrictions also apply if the site is directed to a general audience and the organization has actual knowledge that it collects personal information from children under 13 years of age.

Responding To and Reporting Abuse

A quick, compassionate, and unified response to an alleged or actual incident of abuse is necessary and expected. All allegations are to be taken seriously. In all cases of reported or observed abuse in a ministry event, the entire staff of that event, paid and/or volunteer, shall be at the service of all official investigating agencies.

A mandated reporter must make a report of suspected child abuse. All members of the clergy, employees, child care workers, youth camp administrators or counselors, and volunteers who work with children/youth are mandated reporters.

The goal of an immediate response to alleged or known incidents of abuse will be to ensure the safety of the victim and any additional potential victims. In all cases of alleged or actual abuse, professional support is obtained by informing the Department of Human Resources- Bureau for Children and Families at 1-800-352-6513 **not more than 24 hours after suspecting this abuse or neglect. In any case where the reporter believes that the child suffered serious physical abuse or sexual abuse or sexual assault, the reporter shall also immediately report to the State Police and any law-enforcement agency having jurisdiction to investigate.** The parents/legal guardians of the victim will be notified unless they have been named as the alleged perpetrator of the abuse. Pastoral support is sought by following the conference policy which is:

If the allegation or incident concerns events or persons outside any relationship to a conference and/or local church related event, it is the responsibility of the person who heard the abuse to make the initial report to the Department of Human Resources- Bureau for Children and Families. The procedures outlined in this section will provide guidance for responses and reporting.

Example: Child, youth, or vulnerable adult telling a camp counselor about abuse by a relative during the prior year. If this report were made to the counselor in the course of his/her duties as a camp counselor, then it is the responsibility of the camp counselor to make the call to report. The camp counselor may talk with the Camp Dean or Site Director before making the call, asking for support.

An incident report should be filed with the Site Director as a part of the reporting process.

If the allegation is against or involves a conference staff person, pastor, helper or volunteer, or if it occurred in the course of a conference ministry event, the person in charge of the event, shall contact the Assistant to the Bishop. Procedures for responding to and reporting the abuse are contained herein.

The Director of Communications of the West Virginia Conference or his/her designee is the only person/s authorized to make statements to representatives of the media. All requests for statements shall be directed to the Director of Communications. Staff persons and volunteers are to be trained in how to handle media requests by referring them to the Director of Communications.

How to respond to allegations of abuse

Care for the alleged victim's safety. Once a child, youth, or vulnerable adult has disclosed alleged abuse, the one to whom the disclosure has been made should reassure the alleged victim of a concern for his or her safety and well-being. They will then make the call to Department of Human Resources- Bureau for Children and Families. The alleged victim (and any other potential victims if the abuse has allegedly taken place onsite) should be calmly moved to another safe place onsite in view of at least two other non-related adults. Someone safe and familiar should stay with the victim at all times.

Persons who are accused of abuse, if on site, will be immediately and discreetly removed from the ministry setting (both the accused and the victim to separate locations or areas) until the situation is resolved. This is to protect all persons involved, including the accused. The person to whom the disclosure was made should inform the victim in an age appropriate way that a report will be made to appropriate legal authorities.

Should the victim be in need of immediate medical attention, a call should be made for medical transport by ambulance. The parents/legal guardians of any victim under the age of 18 should be notified. It may not be

appropriate to contact the parents/legal guardians if they are the alleged perpetrators of the abuse, in which event the person designated as the reporter should be contacted and should handle contacting the parents/legal guardians when appropriate.

Report the allegations of abuse. The mandated reporter will obtain the information needed for the filing of reports, including, but not limited to, the victim's name and age, the name of the alleged perpetrator, the alleged facts of the abuse, and physical home addresses for the victim and the perpetrator. It is important to let the victim verbalize the allegations in his or her own words, being careful to limit questions asked of children or youth under the age of 18, or to vulnerable adults. If abuse is suspected a report should be made immediately (**not more than 24 hours after suspecting this abuse or neglect**) to Department of Human Resources- Bureau for Children and Families at 1-800-352-6513. **In any case where the reporter believes that the child suffered serious physical abuse or sexual abuse or sexual assault, the reporter shall also immediately report to the State Police and any law-enforcement agency having jurisdiction to investigate.** It is the responsibility of the mandated reporter to handle these matters in a professional and caring manner. Once the call is made the mandated reporter needs to immediately notify the person in charge of the event who will notify the Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries who will notify the Assistant to the Bishop.

Maintain confidentiality. Allegations are to be discussed only on a need-to-know basis. The person(s) to whom the allegations were disclosed should immediately contact Department of Human Resources- Bureau for Children and Families giving the details to that person. Other adults onsite should be alerted to stay with the alleged victim and other potential victims. Once the allegations have been reported, the person to whom the allegations were made should not discuss the matter with other persons except law enforcement or designated state investigators. To do so could cause irreparable harm to the victims, their families, and the community.

Response Team.

As directed by the Office of the Bishop, the Conference Response Team may be called upon to assist in a given situation.

Handling calls and questions from the media. If a member of the media – newspaper, TV station, Radio station, Magazine – calls or approaches a staff or volunteer in person and asks about the situation, that person should get their name and phone number and respectfully tell them that the Director of Communications will get back to them with the answer as soon as possible. The following “hold response” can be used:

“I want to make sure we give you the most accurate and up-to-date information. The Director of Communications can best help you. If you give me your contact information, deadline and topic you are calling about, I will have them return your call as soon as possible.” or, “Here is the phone number/email of the Director of Communications...”

No staff person should answer any questions. The staff person should be polite, but firm. A staff person should **never** simply tell a reporter, “*No Comment*,” as this response raises concern that the incident (alleged or known) is not being dealt with or taken seriously by the church. Nothing is assured to be “off the record” when talking to the media. A staff person/volunteer should realize that any statement made to the media can be used publicly, even if the reporter says it is “off the record.”

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