

**VI. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE FIFTY-FIFTH SESSION OF  
THE WEST VIRGINIA CONFERENCE**

Resolution Number One

**BOP Health Insurance Funding Transition Resolution**  
**Submitted by the Conference Board of Pensions**

**Whereas:**

- The Board of Pensions (BOP) is responsible each year for recommending the method of funding for the Conference offered active health insurance to the Annual Conference.
- The Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) has asked the BOP to develop a plan to reduce the portion of the Conference budget supporting the active health insurance.
- The active health insurance premiums through HealthFlex are required or fixed costs based upon the number of participants covered and the plans they elect.
- The collection rate of Conference apportionments has continued to decline, currently 78%, which requires the allowance for uncollected apportionment to continue to increase.
- Active health insurance coverage is currently supported through Conference apportionments at over 60% of the total cost, and Charges/employers are supporting approximately 24% of the total cost.
- The appointment process will be extremely difficult if all full-time Charges are not billed for health insurance whether or not they have a participant in the Conference offered active health insurance plan.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

- Over the 3-year period from 2024 to 2026, the active health insurance premium costs shall be removed from the apportioned Conference budget except for the cost to fund Conference employee benefits and the Medicare supplement program.
- During the transition period, the percentage paid by each funding source will be as follows:
  - 2024 – Conference 44%, Charge 40%, Participant 16%
  - 2025 – Conference 22%, Charge 60%, Participant 18%
  - 2026 – Conference 0%, Charge 80%, Participant 20%

- The Conference budget shall be reduced by approximately the following each year as compared to the 2023 Conference budget due to the premium funding shift:
  - 2024 - \$500,000
  - 2025 - \$1.2 million
  - 2026 - \$1.4 million
  - Cumulative reduction: \$3.1 million
- The portion of the premium the Charge is responsible for shall remain a flat rate per participant no matter the number of dependents or plan selected, and the participant rate will depend upon the plan selected and number of dependents.
- All full-time Charges will be billed for at least one participant whether the Charge has a participant in HealthFlex or not.
- \$1 million shall be designated to grant premium support to eligible Charges during the transition years the BOP's Health Insurance Reserve funds and the Pension Fund Inc. Undesignated Reserve Fund will be drawn upon to provide this funding. To be eligible, a Charge's cost must have increased, and it be unable to pay the higher employer premiums.
- This support would be up to 1/3 of the increase in cost to the Charge annually for no more than 3 years.
- The Charge must also demonstrate a plan to be self-sufficient regarding premium payments at the end of the support period.
- Churches electing to leave the denomination who are currently being billed for health insurance, will continue to be responsible for the health insurance cost at 80% of the total plan premium through the appointment year.
- The Equitable Compensation Team shall be involved, and the Conference definition of full-time compensation shall be amended to match the insurance shift.
- This transition plan shall be conveyed to the 2023 Annual Conference for adoption effective January 1, 2024.

## Resolution Number Two

**Resolution Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired or Disabled Clergypersons of the West Virginia Annual Conference**

The West Virginia Annual Conference (the “Conference”) adopts the following resolutions relating to rental/housing allowances for active, retired, or disabled clergypersons of the Conference:

**WHEREAS**, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church (the “Church”), of which this Conference is a part, has in the past functioned and continues to function through ministers of the gospel (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code section 107) who were or are duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministers of the Church (“Clergypersons”);

**WHEREAS**, the practice of the Church and of this Conference was and is to provide active Clergypersons with a parsonage or a rental/housing allowance as part of their gross compensation;

**WHEREAS**, pensions or other amounts paid to active, retired, and disabled Clergypersons are considered to be deferred compensation and are paid to active, retired, and disabled Clergypersons in consideration of previous active service; and

**WHEREAS**, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized the Conference (or its predecessors) as the appropriate organization to designate a rental/housing allowance for Clergypersons who are or were members of this Conference and are eligible to receive such deferred compensation;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. THAT an amount equal to 100% of the pension or disability payments received from plans authorized under The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church (the “Discipline”), which includes all such payments from Wespeth, previously the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, during the year 2024 by each active, retired, or disabled Clergyperson who is or was a member of the Conference, or its predecessors, be and hereby is designated as a rental/housing allowance for each such Clergyperson; and

2. THAT the pension or disability payments to which this rental/housing allowance applies will be any pension or disability payments from plans, annuities, or funds authorized under the Discipline, including such payments from the Wespeth and from a commercial annuity company that provides an

annuity arising from benefits accrued under a Wespeth plan, annuity, or fund authorized under the Discipline, that result from any service a Clergy person rendered to this Conference or that an active, a retired, or a disabled Clergy person of this Conference rendered to any local church, annual conference of the Church, general agency of the Church, other institution of the Church, former denomination that is now a part of the Church, or any other employer that employed the Clergy person to perform services related to the ministry of the Church, or its predecessors, and that elected to make contributions to, or accrue a benefit under, such a plan, annuity, or fund for such active, retired, or disabled Clergy person's pension or disability as part of his or her gross compensation.

NOTE: The rental/housing allowance that may be excluded from a Clergy person's gross income in any year for federal income tax purposes is limited under Internal Revenue Code section 107(2) and regulations thereunder to the least of: (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the Clergy person's employer or other appropriate body of the Church (such as this Conference in the foregoing resolutions) for such year; (2) the amount actually expended by the Clergy person to rent or provide a home in such year; or (3) the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances (such as a garage), plus the cost of utilities in such year.

### Resolution Number Three

#### **Closed Properties, and the Sale and Other Disposition of the Same**

**WHEREAS**, it is deemed desirable by this Annual Conference to declare under what circumstances certain properties may be deemed to be closed, placed in the hands of the Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference and sold, or otherwise disposed of; and

**WHEREAS**, The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church sets forth procedures that should be followed with regard to such matters;

#### **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. When a local church property is no longer used, kept, or maintained by its membership as a place of divine worship, it shall be considered closed.

2. When a local church is closed and is, therefore, deemed to no longer serve the purpose for which it is organized, with the consent of the Bishop, a majority of the District Superintendents of this Conference and the District Board of Church Location and Building, the Annual Conference Trustees shall, upon such procedures as shall be prescribed by them, assume control of the property.

3. If circumstances do not make immediate action necessary, the Conference Board of Trustees may sell, transfer, lease or mortgage such property in accordance with the applicable provisions of The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, as revised from time to time.

4. For purposes of this Resolution, the circumstances which make immediate action necessary shall be deemed to include the following: the possibility that the property will decline materially in value prior to the next meeting of the Annual Conference; the need to expend substantial funds for repair, alteration, safety and health or the Board of Trustees for uses previously authorized by the Annual Conference or the Board; the existence of an exceptional offer of purchase which is not likely to reoccur in the immediate future; and such other unique circumstances which the Board determines, in its discretion, justify the sale of such property as being in the best interest of the Annual Conference and its members. (This resolution is based on the 2016 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, Paragraph 2549).

#### Resolution Number Four

#### **Closed Church – Real and Personal Property Funds**

**WHEREAS**, the Annual Conference annually approves the closing of specific church properties upon recommendation of the Cabinet and the Conference Board of Trustees; and,

**WHEREAS**, said properties may be sold by the Annual Conference Board of Trustees; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Annual Conference through the Conference Board of Trustees and the Conference Treasurer maintains a Property Proceeds Account & Property Funds reserves invested with the W.Va. United Methodist Foundation, Inc; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Trustees may make recommendations to the Annual Conference at a regularly scheduled session of the Annual Conference for the dispersing of these funds; and, the Annual Conference annually directs the Trustees on the allocation of the Property Funds;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, after all legal fees and expenses related to the sale have been paid, the pension liability amount for the closed church (“an amount equal to its pro rata share of any aggregate unfunded pension obligations to the annual conference”), consistent with the 2019 addendum to the Book of Discipline, Paragraph 1504.23, p. 676, shall first be deposited with the Conference Treasurer for pension obligations of the annual conference.

**AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that 10% of the net proceeds from the sale of closed church properties, after all legal fees and expenses related to the sale have been paid, and payment of the pension liability pro rata amount, shall be allocated for an endowment fund for capital improvements, repair and restoration of ethnic local churches. These funds shall be deposited and invested with the W.Va. United Methodist Foundation, Inc., and that the income shall be administered by the Annual Conference Ethnic Local Church Committee (Fiscal Policy 46),

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that whenever a historic ethnic local church is sold that 100% of the net proceeds from the sale of closed church properties, after all legal fees and expenses related to the sale have been paid, and payment of the pension liability pro rata amount, shall be allocated for an endowment fund for capital improvements, repair and restoration of ethnic local churches. These funds shall be deposited and invested with the W.Va. United Methodist Foundation, Inc., and that the income shall be administered by the Annual Conference Ethnic Local Church Committee (Fiscal Policy 46),

**AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that 40% of the proceeds from the sales of closed church properties, after all legal fees and expenses related to the sale have been paid, and payment of the pension liability pro rata amount, shall be allocated to the New Church Development and Congregational Revitalization Fund of the Annual Conference, invested through the W.Va. United

Methodist Foundation, Inc.; these funds may be used as outlined in Paragraph 2549.7, Book of Discipline, administered by the Conference Congregational Development Team and,

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Annual Conference authorizes the Annual Conference Board of Trustees to disperse from the Property Funds those funds needed for conference owned properties, the Board of Trustees' expenses & administration and emergency requests by the Cabinet (as monies are available); the Trustees are to maintain a reserve of no less than \$100,000 in the Property Account. All disbursements are to be reported to the Annual Conference at its next regularly scheduled session.

#### Resolution Number Five

#### **Unlawful Appropriation of Church Property**

**WHEREAS**, at the 1970 through 2016 & 2020 annual meetings of the West Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, certain Resolutions were adopted with reference to the unlawful appropriation by former members and Trustees of local church congregations of real and personal property formerly used in the ministry of The United Methodist Church (said Resolutions being 1970 Resolution No. 4; 1973 Resolution Nos. 5 and 12; 1974 Resolution No. 17; 1975 Resolution No. 22; 1976 Resolution No. 23; 1977 Resolution No. 17; 1978, 1979 and 1980 Resolution No. 11; 1981 Resolution No. 2; 1982 Resolution No. 7; 1983 Resolution No. 2; 1984 Resolution No. 2; 1985 Resolution No. 9; 1986 Resolution No. 11; 1987 Resolution No. 7; 1988 Resolution No. 9; 1989 Resolution No. 5; 1990 Resolution No. 1; 1991 Resolution No. 17; 1992 Resolution No. 11; 1993 Resolution No. 3; 1994 Resolution No. 4; 1995 Resolution No. 2; 1996 Resolution No. 5; 1997 Resolution No. 4; 1998 Resolution No. 2; 1999 Resolution No. 7; 2000 Resolution No.2; and 2001 Resolution No. 8; and 2002 Resolution No. 3; 2003 Resolution No. 7; 2004 Resolution No. 7; 2005 Resolution No.7; and 2006 Resolution No. 7; 2007 Resolution No.11; 2008 Resolution No.7; 2009 Resolution No. 5; 2010 Resolution No. 5; 2011 Resolution No. 7; 2012 Resolution No. 7; and 2013 Resolution No. 4; 2014 Resolution No. 5; and 2015 Resolution No. 6 and 2016 Resolution No. 6; 2019 Resolution No. 4; and 2020 Resolution No. 4 (hereinafter sometimes referred to as the "1970 through 2020 Resolutions"); and

**WHEREAS**, said 1970 through 2020 Resolutions authorized, empowered and directed the Board of Trustees of the Annual Conference to take such action as might be necessary to establish the legal rights of The United Methodist Church in and to all of the real and personal property formerly used in the ministry of The United Methodist Church or its predecessors, which had been or might thereafter be unlawfully appropriated and made provisions as to the disposition of such property and the proceeds thereof; and

**WHEREAS**, the Conference has heretofore paid and will be hereafter obligated to pay legal fees, expenses and court costs in connection with litigation instituted and to be instituted by the Board of Trustees pursuant to said Resolutions and it is the opinion of this Annual Conference that the proceeds of any sale, lease or other dispositions of any such real or personal property coming into the hands of said Board of Trustees should be used to reimburse the Conference for any such legal fees, expenses and court costs heretofore or hereafter paid by the Conference and authority for such use of said proceeds was contained in said 1970 through 2019 Resolutions, which use this Conference desires to ratify and confirm by this Resolution, all as hereinafter provided.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the West Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church as follows:

1. That the Board of Trustees of this Annual Conference after establishing and securing its ownership of and title to any real and personal property formerly used in the ministry of The United Methodist Church, or its predecessors, by any local church as a result of action under and pursuant to any of the above-mentioned Resolutions or this Resolution, shall be authorized to sell any or all of said real or personal property or to enter into appropriate agreements as to the use thereof as in the judgment of said Trustees would-best preserve said property from loss, damage or destruction and provide for its use in accordance with the best interests of and subject to the usage and discipline of The United Methodist Church.
2. That the funds derived from any sale, lease or other disposition of any real or personal property recovered by or coming into the possession of the Board of Trustees as a result of action taken under and pursuant to said 1970 through



2019 Resolutions or this Resolution shall be remitted to the Treasurer of this Annual Conference and be deposited in an account in the name of the Board of Trustees of the West Virginia Annual Conference; and that the Treasurer be and is hereby authorized from time to time to use said funds to the extent necessary to reimburse the Annual Conference for funds heretofore or hereinafter paid by the Conference for legal fees, expenses and court costs in connection with action taken under and pursuant to said 1970 through 2019 Resolutions or this Resolution; that any balance in said special account from time to time in excess of that required to meet anticipated payments shall be invested by the Treasurer in accordance with the direction of the Board of Trustees; and that the Board of Trustees shall report to each Annual Conference hereafter the balance in such account.

3. That except as heretofore and herein modified, said 1970 through 2019 Resolutions shall be and remain in full force and effect.

4. That if, prior to the next regular meeting of this Annual Conference, any local church within the bounds of this Conference, or any such of the members of the congregations of any such church, should withdraw or declare their intention of withdrawing from The United Methodist Church in ways that do not follow the paragraphs of the Book of Discipline that define the process for so doing, and retain or seek to retain possession and control of or otherwise appropriate real or personal property formerly used by such local church in the ministry of The United Methodist Church or its predecessors, such local church is hereby declared to no longer serve the purpose for which it was organized, and, therefore, is deemed to be closed (pursuant to the UM Book of Discipline, Paragraph # 2549) as a local church in the West Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, and the Board of Trustees of this Annual Conference is hereby authorized, empowered and directed to take such action as may be necessary to establish the legal rights of The United Methodist Church in and to such real and personal property, and to eliminate all claims of any and all persons asserting a right of ownership or right of possession adverse to the rights of this Annual Conference including the authority, upon the advice of counsel, to institute legal proceedings and pursue said proceedings to the extent necessary to conclude the issues with finality; and that such real or personal property or the proceeds thereof coming into the possession of said Board of Trustees shall be disposed of, administered, managed and invested as provided in this Resolution and any other resolution

adopted by the Annual Conference. 5. That until the next regular meeting of this Annual Conference the Cabinet and the Board of Trustees are hereby further authorized, empowered and directed on behalf of this Annual Conference to take any and all such action. In addition to the actions hereby authorized, as the Conference Board of Trustees may deem necessary and appropriate to safeguard and protect the interests and rights of this Annual Conference and The United Methodist Church with respect to any real or personal property now or formerly or hereafter used by any local church within the bounds of this Annual Conference.

### Resolution Number Six

#### **Congregations Engaging in Partnerships with their Local Schools**

**WHEREAS:** Jesus was a teacher and spent time instructing people of all ages regarding the coming of the Kingdom of God

Whereas: The Rev. Mr. Wesley incorporated teaching children to read at the New Room Preaching House in 1739

**WHEREAS:** all the branches of the Methodist movement emphasized education including founding institutions of higher learning

**WHEREAS:** Young children growing up in poverty face challenges with cognitive and literary ability and [often] begin school both academically and socioeconomically behind their peers from higher-income backgrounds. (insightintodiversity.com)

**WHEREAS:** over 22.5% of the children and youth in the West Virginia Annual Conference fall below the Federal Poverty Guidelines with the largest percentage being under the age of 6. (Kids Count 2021)

**WHEREAS:** across the United States, students post Covid-19 pandemic are struggling to catch up socially, emotionally, developmentally, and academically (NY Times, May 29, 2022)

**WHEREAS:** West Virginia is in the top 5 of states where students have lost the most academically coming out of the pandemic (USA Today, October 24, 2022)

**WHEREAS:** If a hypothetical classroom of 30 children were based on current demographics in West Virginia, this is how the students in that classroom would live:

Three children low weight at birth, five born exposed to drugs.  
Seven children live in poverty and three would be in foster care.  
Three children are in a racial minority.  
18 children are covered by Medicaid, and one is uninsured.  
Three children live in families where the household head did not graduate from high school.  
10 children live in a home where parents lack secure employment.  
(Kids Count 2022)

**WHEREAS:** reading in elementary school levels often determine the likelihood of graduation from high school ([gradereadinglevel.net](http://gradereadinglevel.net))

**WHEREAS:** West Virginia ranks 49th in the country in the most recent survey of education ([intelligent.com](http://intelligent.com))

**WHEREAS:** research has shown two items will help a child move beyond poverty: education and a positive, appropriate relationship with an adult (Bridges Out of Poverty)

**WHEREAS:** Scripture calls us, “And let people learn to devote themselves to good works to meet urgent needs, so that they may not be unproductive.” (Titus 3:14)

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** that our congregations are strongly encouraged to seek out and actively engage with their local schools in positive and constructive efforts to improve academics, provide basic human needs, support emotional well-being, help develop positive social interactions and support the faculty, staff and support personnel of the school.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that congregations are strongly encouraged to participate with the Board of Global Ministries, Cooperative Community Development workshop on Church and School Collaboratives to help assist the congregation in developing this type of ministry. The event will be held on September 9, 2023, at Life UMC in Fairmont.

## Resolution Number Seven

**Parsonage Allowances - Clergy in Extension Ministries**

**WHEREAS**, The West Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church is the qualified employing organization of its clergy; and

**WHEREAS**, The Internal Revenue Code, Section 107, provides for clergy to exclude (a) the rental value of a home furnished as part of compensation, and (b) the rental allowance paid as part of compensation, to the extent used to rent or provide a home,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that in the calendar year 2024, the actual expense for housing, not to exceed \$18,000, be designated as the parsonage allowance excludable under Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code as part of the compensation of clergy employed by the West Virginia Conference in positions other than local churches such as Director of Administrative Services, Conference Secretary, Conference Staff, and Administrators of Conference Programs and Projects. District Superintendents shall have \$4,000 be designated as the parsonage exclusion under Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code as part of the compensation of clergy employed by the West Virginia Annual Conference in positions other than local churches.

**RESOLUTION NOT ADOPTED**  
**(referred to the Board of Ordained Ministry)**

**Regarding the Preaching and Teaching of United Methodist Doctrine**

WHEREAS, those who are ordained and received as full clergy members in the United Methodist Church are required to answer certain questions which have been asked since the days of John Wesley;

WHEREAS, these questions include the following: “After full examination, do you believe that our doctrines are in harmony with the Holy Scriptures?” and “Will you preach and maintain them?”; and

WHEREAS, many thousands of the women and men who answered these questions in the affirmative are currently serving as pastors, district superintendents, bishops, college professors, or seminary professors;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the West Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, calls upon all of these women and men, within the West Virginia Annual Conference and throughout the connection, to live up to their promise to faithfully preach and teach doctrine which is consistent with The Confession of Faith which we inherited from The Evangelical United Brethren Church, The Articles of Religion which we inherited from The Methodist Church, and the Holy Scriptures themselves.