

Total Number of Pages: 10

Suggested Title: The Christmas Covenant Petition #1 – Amendment the Constitution to Create Regional Conferences on a Global Basis

Discipline Paragraphs: ¶¶ 9, 10, 16, 28, 29, 30, 31, 38, 39, 40, and 50

General Church Budget Implications: No

Global Implications: Yes

Amend ¶¶ 9, (which shall be renumbered ¶ 10), 10 (which shall be renumbered ¶ 9), 16, 28, 29, 30, 31, 38, 39, 40, and 50 as follows:

¶ 10 9. ~~Article III~~ Article II.– There shall be ~~central~~ regional conferences for the work of the Church outside the United States of America around the globe and, if necessary, provisional ~~central~~ regional conferences, all with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth, provided that in The United Methodist Church there shall be no regional or jurisdictional conference based on any ground other than geographical division.

...

¶ 9 10. ~~Article II~~ Article III. – There shall ~~shall~~ may be jurisdictional conferences for the work of the Church in the United States of America within the boundaries of a regional conference, with such powers, duties, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth. ~~, provided that in The United Methodist Church there shall be no jurisdictional or central conference based on any ground other than geographical and regional division.~~

...

¶ 16. *Article IV.*— The General Conference shall have full legislative power over all matters distinctively connectional except as provided for elsewhere in the Constitution:

...

¶ 16.3. To define and fix the powers and duties of annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences and missions, ~~and of central~~ regional conferences, jurisdictional conferences, district conferences, charge conferences, and congregational meetings.

...

¶ 16.4. To provide for the organization, promotion, and administration of the work of the Church ~~outside the United States of America~~ around the globe.

...

¶ 16.10. To ~~fix a uniform basis upon which bishops shall be elected by the jurisdictional conferences and to~~ determine the number of bishops that may be elected by ~~central~~ regional conferences.

...

¶ 16.12. To change the number and the boundaries of ~~jurisdictional~~ regional conferences upon the consent of a ~~majority~~ two-thirds of the annual conferences in each ~~jurisdictional~~ regional conference involved.

...

¶ 16.17. To prohibit by a two-thirds vote changes to portions or provisions of the Discipline that a regional conference would otherwise by the Constitution be permitted to make.

...

## Section V. ~~Central~~ Regional Conferences

¶ 28. Article I.— There shall be ~~central~~ regional conferences for the work of the Church ~~outside the United States of America~~ around the globe with such duties, powers, and privileges as are hereinafter set forth. All regional conferences shall have the same status and the same privileges of action within the limits fixed by the Constitution, provided that during a transition time ending on January 1, 2033 that the General Conference may allow for differences among regional conferences including having different portions of the General *Discipline* apply to different regional conferences.

~~The number and boundaries of the central conferences shall be determined by the Uniting Conference. Subsequently the General Conference shall have authority to change the number and boundaries of central conferences. The central conferences shall have the duties, powers, and privileges hereinafter set forth. Initially, the number and boundaries of the regional conferences shall be as follows:~~

1. There shall be a regional conference for the work of the Church in the United States of America that includes all of the areas that comprise the jurisdictional conferences identified in Division Two, Section VII, ¶ 37.

2. The number and boundaries of regional conferences outside the United States of America shall be as established by the 2020 General Conference, provided that, should the 2020 General Conference make no changes to the boundaries of a central conference which existed prior to the 2020 General Conference, each such central conference shall become a regional conference.

...

¶ 29. *Article II.*— The ~~central~~ regional conferences shall be composed of as many delegates as shall be determined by a basis established by the General Conference. The delegates shall be clergy and lay in equal numbers.

...

¶ 30. *Article III.*— The ~~central~~ regional conferences shall meet within the year succeeding the meeting of the General Conference at such times and places as shall have been determined by the preceding respective ~~central~~ regional conferences or by commissions appointed by them or by the General Conference. ~~The date and place of the first meeting succeeding the Uniting Conference shall be fixed by the bishops of the respective central conferences, or in such manner as shall be determined by the General Conference.~~

...

¶ 31. *Article IV.*— The ~~central~~ regional conferences shall have the following powers and duties and such others as may be conferred by the General Conference:

1. To promote the evangelistic, educational, missionary, social-concern, and benevolent interests and institutions of the Church within their own boundaries.

2. To elect the bishops for the respective ~~central~~ regional conferences in number as may be determined from time to time, upon a basis fixed by the General Conference, and to cooperate in carrying out such plans for the support of their bishops as may be determined by the General Conference, provided that, in regional conferences that have jurisdictional conferences:

a) its bishops will be elected by each of its jurisdictional conferences, and

b) the regional conference shall establish a uniform basis to allocate among its jurisdictional conferences the total number of bishops the General Conference has determined may be elected in that region, provided that a jurisdiction may choose to elect fewer bishops than the regional conference has allocated to that jurisdictional conference.

3. To establish and constitute such ~~central~~ regional conference boards as may be required and to elect their administrative officers.

4. To determine the boundaries of the annual conferences within their respective areas, provided that, in a regional conference with jurisdictional conferences, the jurisdictional conferences shall determine the boundaries of the annual conferences within their respective jurisdictions.

5. ~~To make such rules and regulations for the administration of the work within their boundaries including such changes and adaptations of the General *Discipline* as the conditions in the respective areas may require, subject to the powers that have been or shall be vested in the General Conference. To make changes or additions to the General *Discipline* in the following areas as the conditions and the mission of the Church in the region may require provided that no change shall be made to a portion or provision of the General *Discipline* which the General Conference has by a two-thirds vote prohibited from being changed:~~

a. To define and fix the conditions, privileges, and duties of Church membership, which shall in every case be without reference to race, gender, or status.

b. To define and fix the qualifications, powers and duties of elders, deacons, supply preachers, local preachers, exhorters, deaconesses, and home missionaries without reference to race, gender, or status.

c. To define and fix the powers and duties of annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences and missions, jurisdictional conferences, district conferences, charge conferences, and congregational meetings.

d. To supplement the hymnal and ritual of the Church and matters relating to the form and mode of worship, subject to the limitations of the first and second Restrictive Rules.

e. To fix a uniform basis upon which bishops shall be elected by its region and by any jurisdictional conferences within its bounds.

f. To secure the rights and privileges of membership in all agencies, programs, and institutions in The United Methodist Church regardless of race, gender, or status.

g. To allow the annual conferences to utilize structures unique to their mission, other mandated structures notwithstanding.

h. To make changes in the chargeable offenses and/or their mandatory penalties.

i. To enact such other legislation as may be necessary, subject to the limitations and restrictions of the Constitution of the Church.

6. To appoint a judicial court to determine legal questions arising ~~from~~ ~~on the rules,~~ ~~regulations, and such revised, adapted~~ changed, or new sections of the ~~central~~ regional conference *Discipline* enacted by the ~~central~~ regional conference.

7. To appoint a committee on appeals to hear and determine the appeal of a traveling preacher of that ~~central~~ regional conference from the decision of a committee on trial, provided that in a regional conference with jurisdictional conferences that:

a) the regional conference shall not appoint said committee on a regional basis, and

b) each jurisdiction conference shall appoint said committee to hear and determine the appeal of a traveling preacher of that jurisdictional conference.

8. To establish jurisdictional conferences by dividing all of the area within its boundaries into jurisdictional conferences, and also to abolish such plan of jurisdictional conferences provided that a majority of annual conferences within each jurisdiction consent to the abolishment of the jurisdictional conferences. Changes in the number, names, and boundaries of the jurisdictional conferences may be effected upon the consent of a majority of the annual conferences of each of the jurisdictional conferences involved.

...

¶ 38. *Article II.*— ~~The work of the Church outside the United States of America~~ around the globe may be formed into ~~central~~ regional conferences, the names, number and boundaries of which shall be determined by ~~the Uniting Conference,~~ the General Conference ~~having authority subsequently to make changes in the number and boundaries.~~ The General Conference shall have the authority to establish regional conferences by a two-thirds vote including where no regional conference exists, provided that changes in boundaries which involve of one or more existing regional conferences require the consent of two-thirds of the annual conferences of each regional conference involved. Further, once this paragraph is ratified:

a) The General Conference shall have the authority to make changes to the boundaries of regional conferences without requirement to amend to Division Two, Section VII, ¶ 37.

b) Regional Conferences shall have the authority to make changes to the boundaries of their jurisdictional conferences without requirement to amend to Division Two, Section VII, ¶ 37.

...

Delete ¶ 39 and renumber all of the articles within its section and renumber all subsequent paragraphs of the Constitution.

~~¶ 39. *Article III.* Changes in the number, names, and boundaries of the jurisdictional conferences may be effected by the General Conference upon the consent of a majority of the annual conferences of each of the jurisdictional conferences involved.~~

...

Paragraph 40

¶ 40 *Article IV.* – The number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences and episcopal areas shall be determined by ~~the jurisdictional conferences in the United States of America~~ and by ~~the central regional conferences outside the United States of America~~ which have not organized jurisdictional conferences within their boundaries according to the provisions under the respective powers and pursuant to the respective structures of the jurisdictional and the

~~central regional~~ conferences. The authority of jurisdictional and ~~central regional~~ conferences provided herein is not circumscribed or limited by the authority provided to the College of Bishops to arrange a plan of episcopal supervision.

...

¶ 5049. *Article VI.* – ~~The bishops, both active and retired, of The Evangelical United Brethren Church and of The Methodist Church at the time union is consummated shall be bishops of The United Methodist Church.~~

~~The bishops of The Methodist Church elected by the jurisdictions, the active bishops of The Evangelical United Brethren Church at the time of union, and The bishops elected by the jurisdictions or regional conferences which include parts of the United States of The United Methodist Church shall have life tenure. Each bishop elected by a central regional conference which is entirely outside of the United States of America of The Methodist Church shall have such tenure as the central regional conference electing him them shall have determined.~~

~~The Each regional conference without jurisdictions and each jurisdictional conference shall elect a standing committee on episcopacy to consist of one clergy and one lay delegate from each annual conference, on nomination of the annual conference delegation. The committee shall review the work of the bishops, pass on their character and official administration, and report to the jurisdictional conference its findings for such action as the conference may deem appropriate within its constitutional warrant of power. The committee shall recommend the assignments of the bishops to their respective residences for final action by the jurisdictional conference.~~

AND

Amending terms wherever they occur in the Constitution by changing “central conference” to “regional conference”

Revise: ~~central conference~~ to regional conference.

Revise: ~~central conferences~~ to regional conferences.

The ratification process by the annual conferences for the constitutional amendments in this petition shall begin no later than 30 days after the adjournment of the 2020 General Conference.

Date:

Signature of the Petitioner:

Identification of the Petitioner:

Phone:

City, State, Province, Country:

Email Address: