

Total Number of Pages: 21

Suggested Title: The Christmas Covenant Petition #2 – Enabling Legislation on Regional Conferences, Contingent Upon the Ratification of the Constitutional Amendments to Create Regional Conferences on a Global Basis

Discipline Paragraphs: ¶¶ 540-548, 551-555, 560-567

General Church Budget Implications: No

Global Implications: Yes

Section III. ~~Central~~ Regional Conferences

¶ 540. *Authorization*—1. ~~In territory outside the United States, annual~~ Annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences, mission conferences, and missions, in such numbers as the General Conference by a two-thirds vote shall determine, may be organized by the General Conference into ~~central~~ regional conferences or provisional ~~central~~ regional conferences, with such duties, privileges, and powers as are hereinafter set forth and as the General Conference by a two-thirds vote shall prescribe, provided that the names or boundaries of an existing regional conference may not be changed without the consent of two-thirds of the annual conferences in each regional conference that is involved.

2. There shall be such ~~central~~ regional conferences as have been authorized or shall be hereafter authorized by the General Conference, provided that a ~~central~~ regional conference shall have a total of at least thirty clergy and thirty lay delegates on the basis of representation as set forth in this section, except as the General Conference may fix a different number.

3. The United Methodist Church shall have ~~central~~ regional conferences with ministries in the following countries:

a) *Africa* ~~Central~~ Regional Conference: Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland, South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe;

b) *Central and Southern Europe* ~~Central~~ Regional Conference: Albania, Algeria,

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Republic of Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Tunisia;

c) *Congo ~~Central~~ Regional Conference*: Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Zambia;

d) *Germany ~~Central~~ Regional Conference*: Germany;

e) *Northern Europe and Eurasia ~~Central~~ Regional Conference*: Belarus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Norway, Russia, Sweden, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan;

f) *Philippines ~~Central~~ Regional Conference*: Philippines;

g) *West Africa ~~Central~~ Regional Conference*: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone;

h) *United States Regional Conference: United States of America and all countries, regions and territories that are part of ¶ 37.*

4. A provisional ~~central~~ regional conference may become a ~~central~~ regional conference upon the fulfillment of the necessary requirements and upon the authorization of the General Conference.

¶ 541. *Composition for regional conferences in ¶ 541.3a-g*—1. ~~The central~~ A regional conference in ¶ 541.3a-g shall be composed of clergy and lay members in equal numbers, the clergy members elected by the clergy members of the annual conference and the lay members by the lay members thereof. Their qualifications and the manner of election shall be determined by the ~~central~~ regional conference itself, subject only to constitutional requirements. Each annual conference and provisional annual conference shall be entitled to at least two clergy and two lay delegates, and no other selection of delegates shall be authorized that would provide for more

than one clergy delegate for every six clergy members of an annual conference; except that a majority of the number fixed by a ~~central~~ regional conference as the ratio of representation shall entitle an annual conference to an additional clergy delegate and to an additional lay delegate. Each missionary conference and mission is authorized to elect and send one of its members to the ~~central~~ regional conference concerned as its representative, said representative to be accorded the privilege of sitting with the committees of the ~~central~~ regional conference, with the right to speak in the committees and in the regular sessions of the ~~central~~ regional conference, but without the right to vote. Representatives of missionary conferences or missions shall have the same claim for payment of expenses as is allowed to members of the ~~central~~ regional conference.

2. In the case of a ~~central~~ regional conference, the rule of proportionate representation shall be applied by each annual conference.

¶ 542. *Organization for regional conferences in ¶ 541.3a-g* —1. The first meeting of a ~~central~~ regional conference shall be called by the bishop or bishops in charge at such time and place as they may elect, to which members of the annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions concerned shall be elected on the basis of representation as provided herein. The time and place of future meetings shall be determined by the ~~central~~ regional conference or its executive committee.

2. Each ~~central~~ regional conference shall meet within the year succeeding the session of the General Conference at such time and place as the ~~central~~ regional conference itself or its bishops may determine for the purpose of electing bishops when vacancies occur and for attending to other matters as required. The ~~central~~ regional conference has the right to hold such adjourned sessions as it may determine. The sessions of said conference shall be presided over by the bishops. In case no bishop is present, the conference shall elect a temporary president

from among its own members. The bishops resident in a ~~central~~ regional conference or a majority of them, with the concurrence of the executive committee or other authorized committee, shall have the authority to call an extra session of the ~~central~~ regional conference to be held at the time and place designated by them.

3. The Council of Bishops may assign one or more of its number to visit any ~~central~~ regional conference or provisional ~~central~~ regional conference. When so assigned, the bishop shall be an accredited representative of the general Church, and when requested by a majority of the bishops resident in that conference may exercise therein the functions of the episcopacy.

4. The presiding officer of the ~~central~~ regional conference shall decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the ~~central~~ regional conference, and shall decide questions of law, subject to an appeal to the Judicial Council, but questions relating to the interpretation of the rules and regulations made by the ~~central~~ regional conference for the governing of its own session shall be decided by the ~~central~~ regional conference.

5. A ~~central~~ regional conference, where the laws of the land permit, shall have the power to organize and incorporate one or more executive committees, executive boards, or councils of cooperation, with such membership and such powers as may have been granted by the ~~central~~ regional conference for the purpose of representing it in its property and legal interests and for transacting any necessary business that may arise in the interval between the sessions of the ~~central~~ regional conference or that may be committed to said boards or committees by the ~~central~~ regional conference.

6. Each ~~central~~ regional conference within the bounds of which the General Board of Global Ministries has work shall maintain a cooperative and consultative relationship with the

said board through a duly constituted executive committee, executive board, or council of cooperation; but the legal distinction between the General Board of Global Ministries and the organized church on the field shall always be kept clear.

¶ 543. *Powers and Duties for regional conferences in ¶ 541.3a-g* —1. To A ~~central~~ a regional conference shall be committed for supervision and promotion, in harmony with the *Discipline* and interdenominational contractual agreements, the missionary, educational, evangelistic, industrial, publishing, medical, and other connectional interests of the annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within its territory and such other matters as may be referred to it by said bodies or by order of the General Conference; and it shall provide suitable organizations for such work and elect the necessary officers for the same.

2. A ~~central~~ regional conference, when authorized by a specific enabling act of the General Conference, may elect one or more bishops from among the traveling elders of The United Methodist Church. The number of bishops to be elected by each ~~central~~ regional conference shall be determined from time to time by the General Conference.

3. When a ~~central~~ regional conference shall have been authorized to elect bishops, such elections shall be conducted under the same general procedure as prevails in the jurisdictional conferences for the election of bishops. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have power to fix the tenure of bishops elected by the said ~~central~~ regional conference.

4. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall determine the apportionment amounts for the annual conferences of the ~~central~~ regional conferences for the succeeding quadrennium based on calculation methodology approved by the General Conference upon recommendation by the Council. This determination shall be informed by consultation with

the Council of Bishops.

5. A ~~central~~ regional conference, in consultation with the bishops of that ~~central~~ regional conference, shall fix the episcopal areas and residences and make assignments to them of the bishops who are to reside in that ~~central~~ regional conference. The bishops of a ~~central~~ regional conference shall arrange the plan of episcopal visitation within its bounds.

6. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have authority to elect and support general officers in all departments of the work of the Church within the boundaries of the ~~central~~ regional conference but may not determine the number of bishops.

7. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have power ~~to make such changes and adaptations of the *Book of Discipline* as the special conditions and the mission of the church in the area require~~ as provided by the Constitution including ¶31.5 to make changes 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.

~~, especially concerning the organization and administration of the work on local church, district, and annual conference levels, Such changes shall be made provided that no action shall be taken that is contrary to the Constitution and the General Rules of The United Methodist Church, and provided that the spirit of connectional relationship is kept between the local and the general church. Subject to this restriction, a central conference may delegate to an annual conference within its boundaries the power to make one or the other of the changes and adaptations referred to in this paragraph, upon the request of such annual conference.~~

8. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall fix the boundaries of the annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within its bounds, proposals for changes first having been submitted to the annual conferences concerned as prescribed in the *Discipline* of The United Methodist Church. No annual conference shall be

organized with fewer than thirty-five clergy members except as provided by an enabling act for the quadrennium, which shall not reduce the number below twenty-five. Nor shall an annual conference be continued with fewer than twenty-five clergy members except as provided by an enabling act for the quadrennium.

9. A ~~central~~ regional conference may advise its annual conferences and provisional annual conferences to set standards of character and other qualifications for admission of lay members.

10. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have power to make changes and adaptations in procedure pertaining to the annual, district, and charge conferences within its territory and to add to the business of the annual conference supplementary questions considered desirable or necessary to meet its own needs.

11. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have authority to examine and acknowledge the journals of the annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions located within its bounds and to make rules for the drawing up of the journals as may seem necessary.

12. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have authority to adopt rules of procedure governing the investigation and trial of its clergy, including bishops, and lay members of the Church and to provide the necessary means and methods of implementing the said rules; provided, however, that the ordained ministers shall not be deprived of the right of trial by a clergy committee, and lay members of the Church of the right of trial by a duly constituted committee of lay members; and provided also, that the rights of appeal shall be adequately safeguarded.

13. A ~~central~~ regional conference is authorized to prepare and translate simplified or

adapted forms of such parts of the ritual as it may deem necessary, such changes to require the approval of the resident bishop or bishops of the ~~central~~ regional conference.

14. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have the power to conform the detailed rules, rites, and ceremonies for the solemnization of marriage to the statute laws of the country or countries within its jurisdiction.

15. Subject to the approval of the bishops resident therein, a ~~central~~ regional conference shall have the power to prescribe courses of study, including those in the vernaculars, for its ministry, both foreign and indigenous, including local preachers, lay servants, Bible women, deaconesses, teachers—both male and female—and all other workers whatsoever, ordained or lay. It shall also make rules and regulations for examination in these courses.

16. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have authority to edit and publish a ~~central~~ regional conference *Discipline*, which shall contain in addition to the Constitution of the Church such sections from the general *Discipline* of The United Methodist Church as may be pertinent to the entire Church and also such revised, adapted, or new sections as shall have been enacted by the ~~central~~ regional conference concerned under the powers given by the Constitution or the General Conference.

17. In a ~~central~~ regional conference or provisional ~~central~~ regional conference using a language other than English, legislation passed by a General Conference shall not take effect until twelve months after the close of that General Conference in order to afford the necessary time to make adaptations and to publish a translation of the legislation that has been enacted, the translation to be approved by the resident bishop or bishops of the ~~central~~ regional conference. This provision, however, shall not exclude the election of delegates to the General Conference by annual conferences within the territory of ~~central~~ regional conferences or provisional ~~central~~

regional conferences.

18. A ~~central~~ regional conference is authorized to interpret Article XXIII of the Articles of Religion (*page 71*) so as to recognize the governments of the country or countries within its territory.

19. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have power to authorize the congregations in a certain state or country to form special organizations in order to receive the acknowledgment of the state or country according to the laws of that state or country. These organizations shall be empowered to represent the interests of the Church to the authorities of the state or country according to the rules and principles of The United Methodist Church, and they shall be required to give regular reports of their activities to their respective annual conferences.

20. A ~~central~~ regional conference may, with the consent of the bishops resident in that conference, enter into agreements with churches or missions of other denominations for the division of territory or of responsibility for Christian work within the territory of the ~~central~~ regional conference.

21. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have the right to negotiate with other Protestant bodies looking toward the possibility of church union; provided that any proposals for church union shall be submitted to the General Conference for approval before consummation.

¶ 544. *[Reserved]*

¶ 545. *Records and Archives for regional conferences in ¶ 541.3a-g* —1. The journal of the proceedings of a ~~central~~ regional conference, duly signed by the president and secretary, shall be sent for examination to the General Conference through its secretary. Two paper copies in every translation shall be sent without charge to the General Commission on Archives and

History and the General Council on Finance and Administration, and one copy of a digital version shall be sent along with the paper copies, if available. It is recommended that the journal include memoirs of deceased clergy and deceased clergy spouses.

2. The secretary of a ~~central~~ regional conference in which one or more bishops have been chosen shall report to the secretary of the General Conference the names of the bishop or bishops and the residences to which they have been assigned by the ~~central~~ regional conference.

3. The secretary of each ~~central~~ regional conference shall submit a hardcopy of every translation and adaptation of the general *Discipline* or portion thereof in use in that ~~central~~ regional conference to the General Commission on Archives and History and the General Council on Finance and Administration.

¶ **546.** *Property for regional conferences in ¶ 541.3a-g* —1. A ~~central~~ regional conference, through a duly incorporated property-holding body or bodies, shall have authority to purchase, own, hold, or transfer property for and on behalf of all the unincorporated organizations of The United Methodist Church within the territory of that ~~central~~ regional conference or on behalf of other organizations of The United Methodist Church that have entrusted their property to that ~~central~~ regional conference.

2. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall have authority to make the necessary rules and regulations for the holding and management of such properties; provided, however, that (a) all procedure shall be subject to the laws of the country or countries concerned; (b) no transfer of property shall be made from one annual conference to another without the consent of the conference holding title to such property; and (c) the status of properties held by local trustees or other holding bodies shall be recognized.

3. A ~~central~~ regional conference shall not directly or indirectly, through its incorporated property-holding body or bodies, alienate property or proceeds of property without due consideration of its trusteeship for local churches, annual conferences, the General Board of Global Ministries, and other organizations, local or general, of the Church.

4. A ~~central~~ regional conference or any of its incorporated organizations shall not involve the General Board of Global Ministries or any organization of the Church in any financial obligation without the official approval of said board or organization. All invested funds, fiduciary trusts, or property belonging to an annual conference, a provisional annual conference, a missionary conference, or a mission, or any of its institutions, acquired by bequest, donation, or otherwise and designated for a specific use, shall be applied to the purpose for which they were designated. They shall not be diverted to any other purpose, except by the consent of the conference or mission involved and with the approval of the ~~central~~ regional conference concerned and civil court action when necessary. The same rule shall apply to similar funds or properties acquired by a ~~central~~ regional conference for specific objects. In cases involving the diversion of trust funds and properties within the territory of a ~~central~~ regional conference, the ~~central~~ regional conference concerned shall determine the disposition of the interests involved, subject to an appeal to the judicial court of the ~~central~~ regional conference.

¶ 547. *Regional Conference Agencies for regional conferences in ¶ 541.3a-g* —1. A ~~central~~ regional conference may have a standing committee on women's work. This committee should preferably be composed of the women delegates and such other persons as the ~~central~~ regional conference may elect. The duty of this committee shall be to study the relation of women to the Church and to devise ways and means of developing this portion of the Church membership, to the end that it may assume its rightful responsibilities in the extension of the

Kingdom. The committee shall make recommendations to the ~~central~~ regional conference regarding women's organizations within its areas. A ~~central~~ regional conference organization may become a member of the World Federation of Methodist Women and may elect a representative to the World Federation of Methodist Women within the provisions of the federation.

2. A ~~central~~ regional conference may organize a women's unit, after consultation with the committee on women's work, in connection with any annual conference or provisional annual conference within its bounds and provide a constitution and bylaws for it.

3. A ~~central~~ regional conference that adapts and edits the *Discipline* as provided in ¶ 543.16 shall establish a judicial court, which in addition to other duties that the ~~central~~ regional conference may assign to it shall hear and determine the legality of any action of the ~~central~~ regional conference taken under the adapted portions of the *Discipline* or of a decision of law by the presiding bishop of the ~~central~~ regional conference pertaining to the adapted portions of the *Discipline*, upon appeal by the presiding bishop or by one-fifth of the members of the ~~central~~ regional conference. Further, the judicial court shall hear and determine the legality of any action of an annual conference taken under the adapted portions of the *Discipline* or of a decision of law by the presiding bishop of the annual conference pertaining to the adapted portion of the *Discipline*, upon appeal of the presiding bishop or of such percentage of the members of the annual conference as may be determined by the ~~central~~ regional conference concerned.

4. A ~~central~~ regional conference may have a standing committee on young people's ministry. This committee shall be composed of youth, young adults, and adult leaders of youth or young-adult ministry from each annual conference in the ~~central~~ regional conference. The duty of this committee shall be to study the relation of young people to the Church and to devise ways

and means of developing the Church's ministry for, with, and by young people. The committee shall make recommendations to the ~~central~~ regional conference regarding youth and young-adult organizations within its areas as well as elect delegates to the Global Young People's Convocation (§ 1210).

5. Every board, standing committee, commission, council, and work area of the ~~central~~ regional conference shall designate one of its members as its coordinator of witness ministries. These persons shall help the agencies of which they are members to engage in witness ministries and, in particular, to ask, "How are we intentionally reaching new people for Jesus Christ through our ministries?" and "How are we helping new people grow and mature as disciples of Jesus Christ through our ministries and areas of responsibility?"

¶ 548. *Bishops in Retired Relation for regional conferences in ¶ 541.3a-g—1.* An ordained minister who has served a term or part of a term as a bishop in a ~~central~~ regional conference where term episcopacy has prevailed shall, upon retirement from the effective relation in the ministry, be paid an allowance from the General Episcopal Fund in such sum as the General Council on Finance and Administration shall determine for the years during which the ordained minister served as a bishop.

2. When former central or regional conferences of The United Methodist Church become or have become autonomous churches or entered into church unions, retired bishops therein shall continue to have membership in the Council of Bishops if the retired bishops involved so desire.

¶ 551. *Composition for United States Regional Conference in ¶ 541.3h) —The United States Regional Conference shall be composed of all General Conference delegates from annual conferences in its jurisdictions who are elected to the General Conference immediately prior to the United States Regional Conference meeting and said delegates shall represent those same*

annual conferences. Reserve delegates elected from the annual conferences in its jurisdictions to the General Conference shall also serve as reserve delegates to the United States Regional Conference. In addition, one lay person and one clergyperson from each regional conference outside the United States shall be elected by their regional conferences or their leadership bodies and shall serve with voice but not vote.

¶ 552. Organization for United States Regional Conference in ¶ 541.3h) —1. The United States Regional Conference shall initially meet as the Interim Committee on Organization during General Conference and then within the year succeeding the meeting of the General Conference at such time and place as determined by the preceding United States Regional Conference. The date and place of the first United States Regional Conference meeting shall be fixed in such manner as determined by the General Conference.

2. The United States Regional Conference has the right to hold such adjourned sessions as it may determine. The sessions of said conference shall be presided over by the bishops of the jurisdictional conferences. The bishops shall have the authority to call an extra session of the United States Regional Conference to be held at the time and place designated by them.

3. The presiding officer of the United States Regional Conference shall decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the United States Regional Conference, and shall decide questions of law, subject to an appeal to the Judicial Council, but questions relating to the interpretation of the rules and regulations made by the United States Regional Conference for the governing of its own session shall be decided by the United States Regional Conference.

4. The United States Regional Conference shall have the power to organize and incorporate one or more executive committees, executive boards, or councils of cooperation, with such membership and such powers as may have been granted by the regional conference for

the purpose of representing it in its property and legal interests and for transacting any necessary business that may arise in the interval between the sessions of the United States Regional Conference or that may be committed to said boards or committees by the United States Regional Conference, provided these actions do not modify or supersede the powers and duties of its jurisdictional conferences.

¶ 553. Powers and Duties for United States Regional Conference in ¶ 541.3h) —1. The United States Regional Conference shall receive and act on missionary, educational, evangelistic, industrial, publishing, medical, and other connectional interests of its annual conferences, missionary conferences, and jurisdictions and such other matters as may be referred to it by these bodies or by the General Conference. It shall provide suitable organizations for such work and elect the necessary officers for the same.

2. The United States Regional Conference shall have power as provided by the Constitution including ¶ 31.5 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.

These changes shall be made-provided that no action shall be taken that is contrary to the Constitution and the General Rules of The United Methodist Church, and provided that the spirit of connectional relationship is kept between the local and the general Church.

3. The United States Regional Conference shall have power to make changes and adaptations in procedure pertaining to the annual, district, and charge conferences within its territory and to add to the business of the annual conference supplementary questions considered desirable or necessary to meet its own needs.

4. The United States Regional Conference shall have authority to examine and

acknowledge the journals of the jurisdictional conferences, annual conferences, and missionary conferences within its bounds and to make recommendations for the drawing up of the journals as may seem necessary.

5. The Unites States Regional Conference shall have authority to edit and publish a regional conference *Discipline*, which shall contain in addition to the Constitution of the Church such sections from the general *Discipline* of The United Methodist Church as may be pertinent to the entire Church and also such changed or new sections as shall have been enacted by the regional conference under the powers given by the Constitution or by the General Conference.

¶ 554. *Records and Archives for United States Regional Conference in ¶ 541.3h* —1. The journal of the proceedings of the United States Regional Conference, duly signed by the president and secretary, shall be sent for examination to the General Conference. Two paper copies shall be sent without charge to the General Commission on Archives and History and the General Council on Finance and Administration, and one copy of a digital version shall be sent along with the paper copies.

2. The United States Regional Conference shall submit a copy of every adaptation of the general *Discipline* or portion thereof in use in the regional conference to the General Commission on Archives and History and the General Council on Finance and Administration.

¶ 555. *Conference Agencies for United States Regional Conference in ¶ 541.3h* —1. The United States Regional Conferences shall establish a judicial court, which in addition to other duties that the regional conference may assign to it shall hear and determine the legality of any action of the regional conference taken under the adapted portions of the *Discipline* or of a decision of law by a presiding bishop of the United States Regional Conference pertaining to the adapted portions of the *Discipline*, upon appeal by the presiding bishop or by one-fifth of the

members of the United States Regional Conference. Further, the judicial court shall hear and determine the legality of any action of an annual conference taken under the adapted portions of the *Discipline* or of a decision of law by the presiding bishop of the annual conference pertaining to the adapted portion of the *Discipline*, upon appeal of the presiding bishop or of such percentage of the members of the annual conference as may be determined by the United States Regional Conference.

2. The United States Regional Conference shall establish such other agencies, commissions, or committees as it may determine are important to the work and witness of the Church within its bounds.

Section IV. Provisional ~~Central~~ Regional Conferences

¶ 560. *Authorization*—Annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions outside the United States that are not included in ~~central~~ regional conferences or in the territory of affiliated autonomous churches and that, because of geographical, language, political, or other considerations, have common interests that can best be served thereby, may be organized into provisional ~~central~~ regional conferences as provided in ¶ 540.1.

The United Methodist Church shall have a provisional ~~central~~ regional conference with ministries in the following countries:

a) *Southeast Asia and Mongolia Provisional ~~Central~~ Regional Conference*: Laos, Mongolia, Thailand, and Vietnam.

¶ 561. *Organization*—The organization of provisional ~~central~~ regional conferences shall conform to the regulations prescribed for ~~central~~ regional conferences insofar as they are

considered applicable by the bishop in charge.

¶ 562. *Powers*—The General Conference may grant to a provisional ~~central~~ regional conference any of the powers of a ~~central~~ regional conference except that of electing bishops.

¶ 563. *Ad Interim Provisions*—In the interval between General Conferences, the General Board of Global Ministries, upon the recommendation of the bishops in charge and after consultation with the annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions concerned, may make changes in the boundaries of a provisional ~~central~~ regional conference and may grant to a provisional ~~central~~ regional conference or to any of its component parts any of the powers of a ~~central~~ regional conference except that of electing bishops. All changes in boundaries and all grants of powers authorized by the General Board of Global Ministries shall be reported to the ensuing session of the General Conference and shall expire at the close of that session unless renewed by the General Conference.

¶ 564. *Lay Membership*—An annual conference or a provisional annual conference in the field of a provisional ~~central~~ regional conference shall have the power to set standards of character and other qualifications for admission of its lay members.

¶ 565. *Ad Interim Provisions for Regional Conferences Outside the United States*—To annual conferences, provisional annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions that are outside the United States and are not included in ~~central~~ regional conferences or provisional ~~central~~ regional conferences, the General Conference may grant any of the powers of ~~central~~ regional conferences except that of electing bishops; and in the interval between General Conferences, the General Board of Global Ministries may grant such powers when requested to do so by the bishop in charge and by the annual conference, provisional annual conference, missionary conference, or mission concerned.

¶ 566. *Episcopal Supervision*—The General Conference shall make provision for the episcopal supervision of work in the territory outside the United States that is not now included in ~~central~~ regional conferences.

¶ 567. *Episcopal Visitation*—The Council of Bishops may provide, if and when necessary, for episcopal visitation of mission fields not included in ~~central~~ regional or provisional ~~central~~ regional conferences.

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.

All provisions of the enabling legislation in this petition shall be contingent upon the ratification of constitutional amendments to create regional conferences on a global basis and shall take effect contemporaneously with the ratification of said constitutional amendments.

Date:

Signature of the Petitioner:

Identification of the Petitioner:

Phone:

City, State, Province, Country:

Email Address: