

# Petition Additions and Changes

## Central Conferences

### ¶2201.

**Petition Number: 31974-CC-2201.1-D**

#### Provisional Annual Conference

Under Paragraph #507 We would request the General Conference through its Central Conference Affairs Commission Paragraph #2201.1 to receive and act favorably on our request to grant us the status of a Provisional Annual Conference, commencing July 2000 following the General Conference and the Central Conference. We understand that if the General Conference agrees the implementation will be the responsibility of the Central Conference.

**Petition Number: 31991-CC-NonDis-O**

#### Three new Episcopial Areas add to the Philippines

The Philippine Central Conference Coordinating Council, meeting in Kidapawan, Cotabato, passed the following action:

Voted: To reiterate the action of the Philippines Central Conference in 1992 to the effect that three Episcopial Areas be added to the Philippines Central Conference of the United Methodist Church. It was further voted that one additional Episcopial Area would be acceptable if in the case the three request for three additional Episcopial areas is not possible.

## Conferences

### ¶407.

**Petition Number: 31976-CO-407-D**

#### Term Limits

407. Term Limits: Bishops shall be elected for one eight-year term and may be re-elected for one more term of no more than eight years. In the case of death, early departure or special assignment, a special annual conference shall be called to elect a new bishop.

### ¶511.

**Petition Number: 31978-CO-511-D**

#### Missional Needs

Paragraph 511 of The Book of Discipline shall be amended as follows:

insert on line 11 and after the words "ensuing quadrennium" and to review on the basis of missional needs an application from a jurisdiction which, by number of its church members as provided in paragraph 405, would experience a reduction in the number of its bishops, and recommend the number of bishops to which that jurisdiction should be entitled to the General Conference for determination by the General Conference.

### ¶602.

**Petition Number: 31979-CO-602-D**

#### General Conference Delegates

Whereas, Paragraph 33 (Article IV) of the Book of Discipline (1996) of the United Methodist Church in dictates in part that "the ministerial delegates to the General Conference and to the Jurisdictional or Central Conference shall be elected by the ministerial members in full connection with the annual conference or provisional annual conference."

Whereas, paragraph 5 (Article V) of the Book of Discipline (1996) states in part; "as part of the Church Universal, the United Methodist Church believes that the Lord of the Church is calling Christians everywhere to strive toward unity," and

Whereas, Paragraph 117 of the Book of Discipline (1996) states in part; "Inclusiveness means openness, acceptance, and support that enables all persons to participate in the life of the Church, the community, and the world. Thus, inclusiveness denies every semblance of discrimination," and

Whereas the Preamble to the Constitution in the Book of Discipline (1996) in dictates "The Church of Jesus Christ exists in and for the world, and its very divide is a hindrance to its mission in that world."

Whereas in Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one (equal) in Christ Jesus," and

Whereas, we were all created equal in the sight of God.

Unification, equality, and the ability of all persons to participate in the life of the United Methodist Church does not tally exist in our present-day voting structure for clergy delegates to the General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Only ministerial members in full connection (active and retired) shall be entitled to vote for clergy delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Probationary and Associate members and Local pastors shall not vote; nor can they be elected. They also can not vote on Constitutional Amendments.

A first year lay delegate, regardless of educational background, can vote for lay delegates, but probationary and associate member and local pastors, many of whom have over 30 years of dedicated service in the ministry are denied the right and privileges of voting for a clergy delegate to represent them and their constituents.

In my opinion, this is divide and discrimination and equates with women's suffrage; and with African Americans not being allowed to vote. Our country has corrected these areas of discrimination.

We United Methodists take great pride in being an inclusive, connectional Church. In my opinion, the United Methodist Church is not inclusive, nor is it connected when millions of United Methodists are not represented at the General or Jurisdictional Conferences, nor do they have a representative to vote on Constitutional Amendments, because their Pastors are not considered equal and are denied the right and privilege to vote.

This is very much Un-American and Un-Christian. We were all, in God's eyes, created equal, but some members within Meth-

odism decided that all was not equal and decided to change God's plan for humanity.

In the 1999 Book of Reports for the Virginia Conference (page 14) there is a statement that says in part, "we are an inclusive and pluralistic Church. We desire to have a delegation that is representative of the entire Conference."

Therefore be it resolved that I hereby petition the 2000 General Conference of the United Methodist Church and to amend paragraph 33 (Article IV) of the Book of Discipline (1996) to indicate that ministerial delegates to the General Conference and to the Jurisdictional or Central Conferences shall be elected by all ministerial members attending the Annual Conference or Provisional Annual Conferences; provided that such delegates shall have been traveling preachers in the United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election.

Also, paragraphs 602-1a should be changed to include all ministerial members, and paragraphs 602-1b, 602-1c, and 602-1d, should be eliminated.

Let us make United Methodism truly inclusive and connectional by allowing all clergy to participate in the life of the Church and that the delegates of the General and Jurisdictional Conferences be representative of all United Methodists.

### **Petition Number: 31989-CO-NonDis-O**

#### **Encourage plan for seminary graduates to retire their debt/financial planning**

The Western North Carolina Annual Conference respectfully petitions the 2000 General Conference to:

- a) Encourage each annual conference to develop a plan to help seminary graduates retire their educational debts.
- b) strongly urge United Methodist seminaries to provide annual work shops on financial planning and/or a financial planner to work with their students.

#### **Rationale:**

Many seminarians graduate with high levels of seminary debt as they begin ministry. The cost of seminary education strains normal family expenses, and most annual and missionary conferences are unable to provide sufficient scholarship funds through the Ministerial Educational Fund (MEF). There is a great need for clergy trained for mission and ministry in churches with small memberships and/or in town and rural settings, but many of these small-membership churches are able to pay only minimum compensation. This petition is intended to assist with meeting this critical need.

### **Discipleship**

## **30107**

### **30107-DI-NonDis-O**

**Social Principles be understood as "instructive and persuasive"...**

Whereas, the preface to the Social Principles describes the contents as "instructive and persuasive" calling us "to a prayerful, studied dialogue," and

Whereas, the United Methodist Church is being torn apart over a multiplicity of social, ethical and personal issues, many of which are addressed in the Social Principles; and

Whereas, those who seek to love and serve God hold honest difference of opinion about these and many other issues; and

Whereas, we are urged to learn to live together in the oneness of Christ...a oneness that reaches beyond opinions and attitudes.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Desert South West Conference of the United Methodist Church petition the General Conference as follows:

That the Social Principles in their entirety be understood and interpreted on an ongoing basis under the traditional and stated intention of being "instructive and persuasive," to the end of accepting the integrity of individual convictions and affirming the historic Wesleyan principle: "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all others, charity."

### **Petition number 31993-DI-NonDis-O**

#### **Change name of lay speaker program**

Whereas, the Lay Speaker program implies only "filling the pulpit" to many laity, and

Whereas, a large number of laity becomes frustrated with not being utilized in that capacity after receiving the training, and

Whereas, the Lay Speaker program actually teaches many leadership roles for the laity in the Basic Lay Speaker class: caring, teaching, leading, visiting, worshiping, praying and preaching, and

Whereas, the Lay Speaker program expands each of the leadership roles in the Advanced Lay Speaker classes, and

Whereas, the title of the current program is misunderstood by many of the laity and clergy.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Desert South West Conference petition the General Conference to change the name of the Lay Speaker program to be the Lay Ministry Leadership Program.

### **Financial Administration**

## **1508.6**

### **31138-FA-1508.6-D**

#### **Change GCFA to GBPHB**

Amend 1508, effective January 1, 2001:

An annual conference agency handling such funds shall not offer higher rates of annuity than those listed in the annuity schedule approved by the General **Board of Pension and Health Benefits Council on Finance and Administration**.

## Faith and Order

¶65.

**Petition Number: 31992-FO-65-D**

### Changes to language on abortion

We petition that paragraph 65 (J-Abortion) of the Book of Discipline be amended with the following deletion:

“The beginning of life . . . But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother. ~~for whom devastating damage may result from an unacceptable pregnancy.~~ In continuity with . . .”

Rationale:

We believe that this statement is more in line with the teachings from the Bible.

¶65.

**Petition Number: 31975-FO-65.C-D**

### Homosexual unions

Therefore, be it resolved that the last sentence of Paragraph 65C, The Book of Discipline, 1996, which reads, “Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches,” be deleted.

¶65.

**Petition Number: 31987-FO-65.C-D**

### Move fourth sentence of 65C to 2624

Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches.

Be moved from said paragraph in the Social Principles to Paragraph 2624 (Chargeable Offenses) in the Judicial Administration; to be added to Item 1, after “sexual misconduct, or sexual abuse”; to read: Celebrating homosexual unions.

¶65.

**Petition Number: 31984-FO-65.J-D**

### Ban on Partial Birth Abortion

Whereas, the Church has witnessed and worked, through the ages, to protect “the least of these” (Matthew 25:40), including unborn children and their mothers; that is, from the Didache to the Church Fathers from Martin Luther and John Calvin and John Wesley to Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, from Albert Outler and Paul Ramsey to Mother Teresa, the teachers and teachers of the Church have consistently promoted protection of the unborn and their mothers;

Whereas, the Bishops’ Initiative on Children and Poverty charges us that “Nothing less than the reshaping of The United Methodist Church in response to the God Who is among ‘the least of these’ is required. The evaluation of every thing the Church is and does in light of the impact on the children and the impoverished is the goal.” Thus our policy and practice of abortion must also be reshaped for the sake of the very least of these;

Whereas, Children and Poverty continues: “Communities of faith shaped by God’s presence with the most vulnerable represent alternatives to [not compromises with] the values and visions of the prevailing culture of might makes right, which favors the powerful over the powerless, [the born over the unborn]”;

Whereas, ¶65J on abortion, as it now reads, is morally ambiguous; therefore, this paragraph is incapable of rendering moral guidance on abortion that is consistent with historic Christian teaching and with its own affirmations; this is particularly tragic in American society, which has counted over 35 million abortions performed since 1973 and now averages approximately 3800 abortions performed each day;

Whereas, ¶65J’s moral ambiguity has allowed The United Methodist Church’s General Board of Church and Society, along with the Women’s Division of the General Board of Global Ministries, to affiliate with and support the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, a political lobby that advocates abortion on demand in American society and contradicts ¶65J’s own assertion of “The sanctity of unborn human life”;

And whereas, ¶65J is sufficiently ambiguous to allow United Methodist leaders to support, in a public way, the continued legal status of partial-birth abortion, a procedure which only the most radical advocates of abortion approve;

Therefore be it resolved, that the 1999 session of the North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church hereby charges its Conference Secretary, using the entire rationale stated above, to petition General Conference 2000, in a timely and appropriate manner, to amend ¶65J of The Book of Discipline to read:

¶65J) ABORTION—The beginning of life and the ending of life are the God-given boundaries of human existence. While individuals have always had some degree of control over when they would die, they now have the awesome power to determine when and even whether new individuals will be born. Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother, for whom devastating damage may result from an unacceptable pregnancy. In continuity in past Christian teaching, we recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures. We cannot affirm abortion as an acceptable means of birth control, and we unconditionally reject it as a means of gender selection. We call all Christians to searching and prayerful inquiry into the sorts of conditions that may warrant abortion. We commit our Church to continue to provide nurturing ministries to those who terminate a pregnancy, to those in the midst of a crisis pregnancy, and to those who give birth. Governmental laws and regulations do not provide all the guidance required by the informed Christian conscience. Therefore, a decision concerning abortion should be made only after thoughtful and prayerful consideration by the parties involved, with medical, pastoral, and other appropriate counsel. **We call upon the civil authorities to enact laws, beginning with a ban on so-called partial birth abortions, that will offer protection to the unborn human life. In a culture which devalues human life, the Church is a community of life, offering the life-giving, life-transforming gospel of Jesus Christ.**

¶65.

**Petition Number: 31985-FO-65.J-D**

### Ban on Partial Birth Abortions

¶65J) ABORTION—The beginning of life and the ending of life are the God-given boundaries of human existence. While individuals have always had some degree of control over when they would die, they now have the awesome power to determine when and even whether new individuals will be born. Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother, for whom devastating damage may result from an unacceptable pregnancy. In continuity with past Christian teaching, we recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures. We cannot affirm abortion as an acceptable means of birth control, and we unconditionally reject it as a means of gender selection. **A partial-birth abortion is infanticide, and we, without condition, reject this practice also.** We call all Christians to searching and prayerful inquiry into the sorts of conditions that may warrant abortion. We commit our Church to continue to provide nurturing ministries to those who terminate a pregnancy, to those in the midst of a crisis pregnancy, and to those who give birth. Governmental laws and regulations do not provide all the guidance required by the informed Christian conscience. Therefore, a decision concerning abortion should be made only after thoughtful and prayerful consideration by the parties involved, with medical, pastoral, and other appropriate counsel.

## ¶115.

### Petition Number: 31972-FO-115-D

#### Doctrinal Standards

Add to the Book of Discipline as paragraph 115.2:

All United Methodists are called to be disciples of Jesus Christ. The United Methodist Church is called to be a faithful Christian church in the Wesleyan heritage. This includes honest commitment by the clergy, including the bishops, and the laity to our Doctrinal Standards as stated in The Book of Discipline; to God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and to Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the one and only Savior of the world, and the Lord of all. The United Methodist Church shall reject all kinds of idolatry and reject worship of false gods and goddesses. Any leader, i.e., pastor, bishop, or member of any United Methodist Church board of agency failing to uphold this standard shall be brought up on charges, which if found justified, such leader shall automatically be removed from office as well as defrocked.

## ¶304.

### Petition Number: 31981-FO-304-D

#### Amend 304 to remove reference to homosexuality or marriage

Amend paragraph 304 by making the following additions and deletions:

2. For the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness to the Christian gospel, and in consideration of the influence an ordained ministry on the lives of other persons both within and outside the Church, the Church expects those who seek ordination to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life. To this end they agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity and fidelity in all personal relationships, ~~fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness~~, social responsibility, and growth in grace and in the knowledge and love of God.

3. While persons set apart by the Church for or ordained ministry are subject to all the frailties of the human condition and the pressures of society, and are required to maintain the highest standards of holy living in the world. ~~Since the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching, self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be accepted as candidates, or dained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.~~

## ¶304.

### Petition Number: 31986-FO-304.3-D

#### Retain language in second sentence of 304.3

Retain the second sentence of ¶304.3 of *The Book of Discipline* (1996), page 172, which reads:

Since the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching, self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be accepted as candidates, or dained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.

### Petition Number: 31988-FO-NonDis-O

#### Doctrinal Integrity

To the members of the 2000 General conference of the United Methodist Church

WHEREAS; People need right thinking and right teaching in establishing a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and to live rightly day by day, and to stand firm in times of troubles; and

WHEREAS; There is a present crisis in the United Methodist Church, coming from those who treat theology as a matter of personal experimentation and who use the umbrella of pluralism and inclusiveness to support an agenda of theological relativism; and

WHEREAS: Some seminary teachers and church officials exchange the historical faith based on Biblical standards for political, sexual or gender-based ideologies with religious veneers; and

WHEREAS: The ancient condemned heresies continue to reappear in modern ideologies in some seminary teaching and in some United Methodist church boards and agencies;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the Iowa Annual Conference supports doctrinal integrity which includes giving primacy to Scripture, re-engagement of the Wesleyan devotional tradition, and an obedience to God in the forming of our lives in covenant communities after the pattern of the mind of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

### 31990-FO-NonDis-O

#### Concerning the Meaning of the Social Principles

We petition that the General Conference directs the respective Boards (or Commissions), which regularly work on the Social Principles, to hear and take into consideration all of the experiences of the worldwide church related to ethical questions, and from this to clearly indicate which parts, or parts, of the Principles have the characteristic of being fundamental, are in accordance with the Gospel, and are therefore valid for all Christians.

Rational: Our Experiences and Observations

1. The Social Principles make the claim that they take a stand on the human questions and problems of the contemporary world.

They formulate the opinion of the General Conference with regard to these broad fields:

- a) The Natural World
- b) The Nurturing Community
- c) The Social Community
- d) The Economic Community
- e) The Political Community
- f) The World Community

2. The Social Principles were prepared and formulated by a Board of the General Conference, which itself consisted entirely of Americans. This means that the opinions and critiques were formulated from the perspective of the existing situation in America (United States of America) so ciety. There are many fundamental questions which can be supported and approved of by Methodists worldwide. Yet there are also questions which are not relevant to the situation in Europe, Asia, or Africa.

3. We wish to put forward the following observations:

a) Our world consists not only of East and West, but of North and South.

b) Throughout Europe, Africa, and Asia there live many different peoples with their own cultures, histories, religions, languages, and varying social realities.

c) Already we observe that within the European situation changes and developments take place at different speeds. The church must take these differences into consideration in its ministry.

4. In the Cold War era these differences with our fellow Christians in Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe could not be discussed and debated. The political situation made subsequent discussions about political, economic, social and religious principles impossible at that time. A dialogue has now begun, and we experience differences in opinions about these matters. Each opinion has its correctness and no one should be made subordinate to another.

5. If the General Conference of the United Methodist Church truly wishes to comment on the human questions and problems of our time, and does not wish to speak only to the Christians in the United States of America, then it must seek to do justice to the diversity of the world.

Submitted by the Executive Committee of the Central Conference of Central and Southern Europe.

#### *General and Judicial Administration*

### ¶266.

**Petition Number: 31971-GJ-266-D\$**

#### **Laity Day Offering**

¶266. The special Sundays in The United Methodist Church are intended to be illustrative of the nature and calling of the church and are celebrated annually. The special Sundays are placed on the calendar to make clear the calling of the church as the people of

God, and to give persons the opportunity of contributing offering so special programs.

Six special church wide Sundays provide for church wide offerings to do deeds expressive of our commitment: Human Relations Day, One Great Hour of Sharing, World Communion Sunday, United Methodist Student Day, Peace with Justice Sunday, and Native American Awareness Sunday. Two special Sundays are without church wide offering: Heritage Sunday and Laity Sunday. Three church wide Sundays, Christian Education, Golden Cross, and Rural Life Sundays, provide opportunities for an annual conference offerings. **Laity Sunday provides an opportunity for the Conference Board of Laity to designate and offering for a lay led project in the annual conference.** (Balance of paragraph 266 continues.)

(Refer to above)

**268.2.** Laity Sunday—Laity Sunday shall be observed annually, preferably on the third Sunday in October. Laity Sunday calls the Church to celebrate the ministry of all lay Christians, as their lives are empowered for ministry by the Holy Spirit. The observance of Laity Sunday shall be under the general supervision of the General Board of Discipleship. Any general agency of the Church that desires to recommend a theme for a given year for this Sunday may do so two years prior to the observance for which the recommendation is made. This recommendation is to be made to the General Board of Discipleship, and the decision of the annual theme of this Sunday shall be made by the voting members of the General Board of Discipleship. **The Conference Board of Laity may designate a lay led project for which an offering may be requested throughout the annual conference.**

(Also referred to paragraph 266)

#### ¶630.2

d) To provide support and direction for such lay programs as lay speaking, the observance of Laity Day, **which may include a conference wide offering for a lay led project**, and the work of lay leaders on the local and district levels.

### ¶267.

**Petition Number: 31968-GJ-267.3-D\$**

#### **Clarify use of World Communion Sunday receipts**

Delete the first sentence of ¶267.3, second paragraph.

Amend ¶267.3, third paragraph, as follows:

a) 50 per cent for Crusade Scholarships, to be administered by the ~~Crusade Scholarship Committee of the~~ General Board of Global Ministries, **with at least one half of the annual amount for ministries beyond the United States of America;**

#### *Global Ministries*

### ¶1312.

**Petition Number: 31969-GM-1312.1-D**

#### **Include mission institutions as potential mortgagees**

Amend 1312.1.i as follows:

...for the purpose of making first mortgage loans to United Methodist churches, districts, city societies, district unions, **mission institutions**, or conference church extension agencies for the purchase of sites...

**30113-GM-NonDis-O****UMW have student liaison with campus ministers and chaplains & work with GBHEM**

Whereas, an important and historic link existed between the organic predecessors to the United Methodist Women and campus ministers prior to 1968, and

Whereas, this link enhanced the recruitment of students into campus ministry programs throughout the nations, and

Whereas, campus ministry programs are the best opportunity on any campus to reach, teach and lead students on their faith journey;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Desert Southwest Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry, with the support of the Desert Southwest United Methodist Women and the Desert Southwest Conference Council on Ministries, petition the General Conference to request that each local United Methodist Women's unit have an officer responsible for student liaison, communicating to campus ministers and chaplains the names of young people attending various colleges and universities, and

Be it further resolved that this officer work in cooperation with the local church work area in Higher Education and Campus Ministry, utilizing the resources of the Division of Higher Education of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

***Higher Education and Ministry*****¶33.****Petition Number: 31982-HE-33-C****Amend 33 - Change "ordained ministerial" to "clergy"**

¶33. Article IV. The ordained ministerial **clergy** delegates to the General Conference and to the jurisdictional or central conference shall be elected by and from **the clergy members of the ordained ministerial members** in full connection with the annual conference or provisional annual conference.

**¶248.****Petition Number: 31977-HE-248.7-D****Absentee Ballot**

Whereas, when a church has been completely destroyed, a special charge conference will be called for the disposition of that matter.

Whereas, all members will be notified of said time and place.

Whereas, the special session called for shall be the only business of that matter and, following the Book of Discipline, only members in attendance may have a vote.

Whereas, there are no provisions provided in the Book of Discipline 1996 for unforeseeable situation of members not being able to attend.

Therefore be it resolved, to add after the following sentence in Paragraph 248:7:

The purpose of such special session shall be stated in the call, and only such business shall be transacted as in harmony with the purpose of the call.

Sealed absentee ballot, as requested by member and received back before the church conference vote, will be considered a vote.

**¶355.****Petition Number: 31970-HE-355.1-D****End mandatory retirement**

Whereas, life expectancy continues to rise, and

Whereas, many clergy are healthy and vital and undiminished skills well into their 70's and beyond, and

Whereas, a number of clergy continue to serve churches in the retired supply status, and

Whereas, there is an increasing shortage of clergy in the United Methodist Church, and

Whereas, mandatory retirement causes the unwarranted loss of effective and exceptional clergy, including those serving in the episcopacy, and

Whereas, procedures are in place to remove appointed clergy from the appointive process for cause, including ineffectiveness, and

Whereas, we affirm that "Every person has a right to a job at a living wage." (Paragraph 67.C),

THEREFORE, I petition the General Conference of the United Methodist Church meeting in session at Cleveland, Ohio, May 2-12, 2000, to end mandatory retirement in the United Methodist Church by removing all references to mandatory retirement for clergy from the Book of Discipline, including, but not limited to:

1) Delete the entire content of Paragraph 335.1, renumber the remaining paragraphs accordingly (Paragraph 335.2 becomes Paragraph 335.1, etc.), and amending all references to these paragraphs to reflect the changes.

2) Amend Paragraph 409.1 by deleting "Mandatory" making the title simply be "Retirement."

3) Amend Paragraph 409.1a by changing "shall be retired" to "may retire" so that the sentence begins "A bishop may retire on August 31 next following . . ."

4) Amend Paragraph 714.3 by

a) deleting the second full sentence "Mandatory retirement for elective and appointive staff shall be at age seventy." and

b) amending the current third full sentence by deleting "other employed" so that it reads, "There shall be no mandatory retirement age for staff."

5) Making all editorial changes to other paragraphs that refer to mandatory retirement or the above paragraphs as needed to reflect the ending of mandatory retirement in the United Methodist Church.

**¶414.****Petition Number: 31983-HE-414.3-D****Responsibilities of Bishops to Give Spiritual and Temporal Leadership**

Amend 414.3 to read:

To guard, transmit, teach, and proclaim, corporately and individually, the apostolic faith as it is expressed in Scripture and tradition, and, as they are led and endowed by the Spirit, to interpret that faith evangelically and prophetically and our Wesleyan tradition.

## ¶2626.

**Petition Number: 31973-HE-2626.2-D****Delete paragraph 2626.2**

In ves ti ga tion and Trial of a Bishop

WHEREAS in re cent years some ques tions have arisen re garding the fair ness in the hear ing and pro cess ing of al le ga tions of im proper ac tiv ity by a Bishop; and

WHEREAS it is de sir able that not even the ap pear ance of fa vor itism or lack of full and proper con sid er a tion be pres ent, if for no other rea son than that a find ing of “not guilty” will re move any pos si ble lin ger ing sus pi cion by per sons not pres ent at the trial; and

WHEREAS it is de sir able and im por tant that *all per sons* be lieve that a find ing of *innocent* is true and cor rect;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED BY THE 2000 GEN ERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH THAT IN PARA GRAPHS 413.2 AND 413.3 **WHER EVER** “Col lege of Bishops in that ju ris dic tional or cen tral con fer ence” or “Col lege of Bishops” ap pears they shall be re placed by the term “**Coun cil of Bishops**”; AND BE IT FURTHER RE SOLVED THAT IN **PARA GRAPH 413.3a**) the words “for ward it to the ju ris dic tional or cen tral con fer ence com mit tee on in ves ti ga tion” be stricken and the fol low ing sub sti tuted for them: “**For ward it to the Coun cil of Bishops com mit tee on in ves ti ga tion**”; AND BE IT FURTHER RE SOLVED THAT IN **PARA GRAPH 413.3b**) the fol low ing words be added: “**The Coun cil of Bishops com mit tee on in ves ti ga tion shall re view the de ci sion of any ju ris dic tional or cen tral con fer ence com mit tee on episcopacy on mat ters which have been re ferred to them. Af ter re view ing that de ci sion the Coun cil of Bishops Com mit tee on in ves ti ga tion may re fer the mat ter for fur ther ju dicial con sid er a tion and trial.**”; AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT PARAGRAPH 2626.2(a) and (b) BE DELETED.

*Independent Commissions**New Title***30286-IC-2303-D\$**

**In crease Com mis sion mem ber ship by 14; WSF sup ple ment funds raised by the Com mis sion**

## ¶2402.

**Petition Number: 31980-IC-2402.2-D****Re spon si ble Re la tions with the Na tional Coun cil of Churches**

We pe ti tion that the fol low ing be added in The Book of Dis ci pline as 2402.2.d:

The United Meth od ist Church shall re late ec u men i cally with all will ing Chris tian churches and es pe cially with de nom i na tions shar ing a Wes ley an her i tage. The United Meth od ist Church shall par tic i pate in the Na tional Coun cil of Churches in so far as this is con sis tent with clas si cal Chris tian ity as stated in the his toric Chris tian ec u men i cal creeds, and shall with hold funds from the ac tiv i ties of the Na tional Coun cil of Churches that fail to meet this stan dard.

*Local Church***Petition Number: 31971-GJ-266-D\$****La ity Day Offer ing**

¶266. The spe cial Sun days in The United Meth od ist Church are in tended to be il lus tra tive of the na ture and call ing of the church and are cel e brated an nu ally. The spe cial Sun days are placed on the cal en dar to make clear the call ing of the church as the peo ple of God, and to give per sons the op por tu nity of con trib uting of fer ing so spe cial pro grams.

Six spe cial church wide Sun days pro vide for church wide of fer ings to do deeds ex pres sive of our com mit ment: Hu man Re la tions Day, One Great Hour of Sharing, World Com mu nion Sunday, United Meth od ist Stu dent Day, Peace with Jus tice Sunday, and Na tive Amer i can Aware ness Sunday. Two spe cial Sun days are with out church wide offer ing: Her itage Sunday and La ity Sunday. Three church wide Sun days, Chris tian Ed u ca tion, Golden Cross, and Ru ral Life Sun days, pro vide op por tu ni ties for an nual con fer ence of fer ings. **La ity Sunday pro vides an op por tu nity for the Con fer ence Board of La ity to des ig nate and of fer ing for a lay led pro ject in the an nual con fer ence.** (Bal ance of para graph 266 con tinues.)

(Re late to above)

**268.2.** La ity Sunday—La ity Sunday shall be ob served an nu ally, prefer a bly on the third Sunday in Oc to ber. La ity Sunday calls the Church to cel e brate the min is try of all lay Chris tians, as their lives are em pow ered for min is try by the Holy Spirit. The ob ser vance of La ity Sunday shall be un der the gen eral su per vi sion of the Gen eral Board of Dis ci ple ship. Any gen eral agency of the Church that de sires to rec om mend a theme for a given year for this Sunday may do so two years prior to the ob ser vance for which the rec om men da tion is made. This rec om men da tion is to be made to the Gen eral Board of Dis ci ple ship, and the de ci sion of the an nual theme of this Sunday shall be made by the vot ing mem bers of the Gen eral Board of Dis ci ple ship. **The Con fer ence Board of La ity may des ig nate a lay led pro ject for which an offer ing may be re quested through out the an nual con fer ence.**

(Also re lated to para graph 266)

## ¶630.2

d) To pro vide sup port and di rec tion for such lay pro grams as lay speak ing, the ob ser vance of La ity Day, **which may in clude a con fer ence wide offer ing for a lay led pro ject**, and the work of lay lead ers on the lo cal and dis trict lev els.

**Petitions Voided by Committee on Reference**

31922

31924

31132

**Petitions Referred to New Legislative Committee**

Pet.# - From - To

30216 - CS - GM

30571 - CS - GM

30579 - CS - GM

30583 - CS - GM

31024 - GF - FO

31279 - GJ - CO 3

1373 - CS - IC

31735 - CS - FO

31754 - CS - IC

31757 - GJ - FO

31760 - DI - IC

31782 - CS - DI

31801 - FO - LC