

Women by the Numbers: Who Is at the Decision-Making Table?

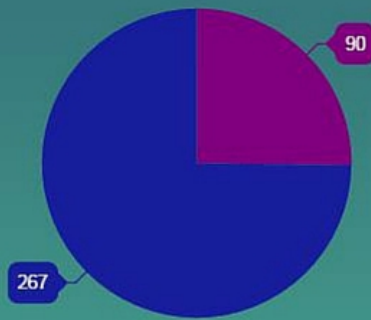
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Introduction

A total of 864 delegates will meet from May 10-20th in Portland, Oregon to revise church laws, adopt new ones, and approve plans and budgets for church-wide programs. Half of the delegates are laity and half are clergy, and the number of delegates representing each jurisdiction and each annual conference is proportional to the jurisdiction and annual conference's membership. For the next three months, Women by the Numbers will be taking a closer look at who will be at this decision-making table in May, especially regarding the representation of women at General Conference. Annual Conferences outside of the United States are organized into seven Central Conferences by regions in Africa, Europe and the Philippines. Also included in the Central Conference delegation are those delegates from the autonomous, or affiliated churches. This month we will provide a closer look at the Central Conference delegates, who make up 42% of all General Conference delegates.

WHO IS AT THE DECISION-MAKING TABLE?



Female (25%) Male (75%)

OF ALL 360*
CENTRAL
CONFERENCE
DELEGATES,
90 ARE WOMEN &
267 ARE MEN.

*3 DELEGATES DID
NOT REPORT
GENDER.

CENTRAL CONFERENCE BREAKDOWN

A surprising observation...all Central Conferences had approximately (within 5 points) the same percentage of female delegates. [Click Here](#)

Africa- 24%
Philippines- 27%
Europe/Eurasia- 29%
Autonomous- 27%

Category	Laity		Clergy		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Female	63	35%	27	15%	90	25%
Male	116	64%	151	84%	267	74%
Total overall	179	50%	178	50%	360*	100%

** 3 Central Conference delegates do not list their gender*

Highlights:

Of the 864 delegates elected to the 2016 General Conference, 360 are Central Conference delegates.

Of the 360 Central Conference delegates, 267 (74%) are male and 90 (25%) are female, with 3 delegates not listing a gender.

Of the 180 clergy delegates from the Central Conferences, 151 (84%) are male and 27 (15%) are female.

Of the 180 lay delegates from the Central Conferences, 116 (64%) are male and 63 (35%) are female.

The largest group represented among Central Conference delegates are male clergy at 151 delegates (42%) of all 360 Central Conference delegates.

The smallest group represented are female clergy at 27 (7.5%) of all Central Conference delegates.

Lay Women:

There are only 63 Central Conference laywomen delegates elected to General Conference.

Unfortunately, we do not know how many total laywomen there are in the Central Conferences so we cannot tell if this is representative.

Clergywomen:

There are only 27 Central Conference clergywomen delegates elected to General Conference.

Unfortunately, we do not know how many total clergywomen there are in the Central Conferences so we cannot tell if this is representative.

Compared to 2012 numbers:[1]

The percentage of clergywomen from the Central Conferences went up by 1% from 2012 and 2016, and the percentage of lay women from Central Conferences went down by 3% from 2012 to 2016. The numbers of Central Conference female delegates in both lay and clergy categories is very low, with little change in numbers from 2012 to 2016. Why is this?

2012 Lay- 62% male/38% female vs.2016 Lay- 64% male/ 35% female

2012 Clergy- 86% male/14% female vs. 2016 Clergy- 84% male/15% female

Highlights of Central Conference Delegates by Region:

The number of female clergy elected as delegates to General Conference is very low in each region. Where are our Central Conference clergywomen delegates? Are there just not that many clergywomen in the Central Conferences or are Central Conference clergywomen just not elected as delegates to General Conference?

Coming up:

In the next Women by the Numbers, we take an in-depth look at the US delegates, breaking the numbers down by clergy/lay status, conference, and membership. And stay tuned in the coming weeks for more statistics leading up to General Conference in Portland this May.

[1] See the Women by the Numbers archives for 2012 General Conference delegate figures available [here](#).