

ALASKA UNITED METHODIST CONFERENCE

of

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REQUEST FOR DECLARATORY DECISION RELATED TO GENERAL CONFERENCE  
2024

20 June 2022

WHEREAS the Alaska United Methodist Conference (AUMC) is a body created by the General Conference as provided in ¶587 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*, and

WHEREAS the AUMC as provided in ¶586 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* is also an annual conference for purposes of providing to the Judicial Council a Request for Declaratory Decision, and

WHEREAS United Methodist delegates to the General Conference are elected by annual conferences as provided in ¶502.1.a) and others, and

WHEREAS the AUMC has resolved to elect delegates and reserve delegates to the 2024 General Conference in 2023 as permitted in ¶507.3, and

WHEREAS the Commission on the General Conference (COGC) has tendered to the Church a confusing order stating that the 2020 General Conference has been postponed to 2024, and

WHEREAS the COGC had previously announced that there will be a 2024 General Conference to be held in Manila, Philippines, having subsequently rescinded the venue of that General Conference, but not its timing, and

WHEREAS ¶14 of the Constitution provides that General Conference “shall meet once in four years,” and

WHEREAS the COGC announced the original opening date of the last scheduled regular General Conference as 05May20, and

WHEREAS ¶34 of the Constitution provides that “The annual conference shall elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference....”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska United Methodist Conference, under its authority granted in ¶¶2610.2.(c) and 2610.2(j), submits to the Judicial Council this Request for Declaratory Decision on the meaning, application, and effect of ¶¶14, 34, 502, and 511.5 as they relate to the decision of the Commission on the General Conference to postpone General Conference 2020 into 2024 to be held in lieu of the previously announced regular General Conference of 2024, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska United Methodist Conference, under its authority granted in ¶2609.5, asks that the Judicial Council determine the legality of the decision of the Commission on the General Conference to postpone General Conference 2020 into 2024 to be held in lieu of the previously announced regular General Conference of 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

The Alaska United Methodist Conference

Nico Reijns, Secretary  
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**Bishop:** Rev. Elaine J. W. Stanovsky  
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August 22, 2022

UMC Judicial Council,  
c/o LaNella Smith, Assistant to the J.C. Secretary,  
1215 Shady Lane, Durham, NC 27712  
[secretary@umcjudicialcouncil.org](mailto:secretary@umcjudicialcouncil.org)

#### REQUEST FOR DECLARATORY DECISION

Attached to this email (and enclosed in the physical mailing) is a request for a declaratory decision on General Conference 2024 from the Alaska Conference. This was Petition #3 at the 2022 session of the Alaska Annual Conference, adopted on June 20, 2022. The action appears on page 12 of the attached minutes of the annual conference.

Sincerely,  
Rev. Nico Reijns

CC:  
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#### *Our Mission:*

*Held and supported by the transforming relationship with God through Christ, we of the Alaska United Methodist Conference seek to be a community that creates a home for all peoples, finds our hope through grace and journeys together into God's preferred future.*

Rev. Dan Wilcox seconded

**VOTE:** (to receive the petition): Total Ballots 40, yes 38, no 2

Rev. Murray Crookes (Every Nation UMC) moved adoption of petition #5

Seconded by: Lonnie Brooks

### **Discussion**

Rev. Murray: 260+ mass shootings this year, now is not the time for us to be silent. Worked on petition with (deaconesses Chivi Crookes and Kelly Marceales) so we might have a statement and action as Methodists on where we stand on this issue. Petition calls to be forwarded to elected leaders, and for people in local settings to contact as well. List of actions slightly modified from Book of Resolutions.

Bishop Stanovsky opened the ballot

While waiting for a ballot the conference viewed a Global Ministries Video. The video reminded us that we are called to mission outside the church in this time of COVID-19, racism, climate change... Global Ministries is at work in more than 115 countries... Invited to be a partner: pray, serve locally, support those who serve globally. Be a partner with God.

**VOTE** on Petition #5: Resolution on Gun Violence. Total Ballots 40, yes 37, no 3

**BREAK for 20 minutes until 2:40pm.**

Bishop Stanovsky called us back from break 2:53pm.

- Bishop introduced Rev. Shane Moore, the parliamentarian for PNW since the AK parliamentarian is sponsor of Petition #4

The Bishop ruled Petition #4 out of order as the Commission on General Conference has not yet allocated delegates for 2024.

### **Petition #3: Request for a declaratory decision**

Lonnie Brooks moved adoption of Petition #3

Seconded by Von Cawvey (lay, St. John)

### **Discussion**

Lonnie: Questions about who the delegates to the next general conference will be.

Bishop Stanovsky opened the ballot

While waiting for the ballot, delegates viewed the Africa University Video: A mission moment... For more than 20 years Africa Univ. creates leaders who enhance UMC and Africa. Graduates

around the world affecting change... Giving to the fund invests in hopes and dreams of a continent and the UMC.

**VOTE: Total Ballots 38 ballots, yes 36, no 2**

### **2023 Budget final discussion**

Jim Altar: Moves adoption of the budget in the PCH *with the amendment* / correction made earlier. (from committee - no second)

Rev. Lisa Talbottt raises a question from the chat from Susan Williams about Every Nation UMC (16% of the budget, would like more information). Asks for permission for Erin Day to respond.

- Bishop asks for consent, it is given.

Erin Day (as Vitality Chair): Every Nation UMC is completing year 4 of their 5 year funding cycle (set by GNW IV Team). New Church has had 2 of 4 years during COVID pandemic creating extra challenges to create this new ministry. Started as multicultural church plant, during COVID Rev. Murray has learned more about context, used pandemic to reimagine the plant away from a traditional model of church to more expansive vision of a network of care for the Native community. In this 5th year of approved funding the focus will be for the development of a 501c3 to integrate with other organizations in Anchorage and beyond to care for Alaskan Natives in Anchorage and beyond.

Jim Alter: earlier today we approved the recommendation of the equitable compensation task force. Budget compared to 2022 we are shifting roughly \$30,000 from what was paid by apportionments to non apportionment sources (principally from reserves). That shift tries to strengthen special financial support for churches upon request. More reserve money available to assist with clergy compensation or benefits.

Bishop Stanovsky opened the ballot

While waiting for the ballot, delegates viewed GCORR Video: welcoming all people, difficult conversations on racism and bias...about how we as Christians address racism and bias. Since 1968 the UMC has looked to GCORR to help answer these questions. The commission has been called to do more recently, seeking to make tools and resources more broadly available. Launched new website in 2019 for resources to help individuals and faith communities.

**VOTE: Total Ballots 40, yes 40, no 0**

### **Nominations Report final discussion**

Christina: Updates / changes to nominations

- Removed Barbara Mitchell from associate lay leader
- Add Susan Williams to COSROW recommendation to PNW
- Now have two nominees to AK Child and Family board slot. Would like to pass along both names to AK Child and Family and work with them on identifying the individual board member.

# Alaska United Methodist Conference Interested Parties & Persons

Rev Nico Reijns [Conf Sec'y] <PastorReijns@gmail.com>,  
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Rev Christina DowlingSoka [AKUMC Superintendent] <dwlngsk@yahoo.com>,  
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