

1024-8 Petition from the Northeastern Jurisdiction Conference on Meaning, Application, or Effect of ¶ 48 of the 2016 *Discipline* Related to the Assignment of a Bishop to to Annual Conferences Across Two Jurisdictions

**NORTHEASTERN JURISDICATIONAL SESSION
JULY 7 – 12, 2024**

Petition for Declaratory Decision #3

Friday, July 12, 2024

PLENARY 9:

Bishop John Schol presiding, assisted by Bishop Burgos Nunez and Bishop Jane Middleton;
Declaratory Decision moved by Becca Girrell:

“Request for a declaratory decision approved under the Provisions of paragraph 2610, the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference requests a Declaratory Decision on the constitutionality, meaning, application, and effect of paragraph 48 or any other constitutional or disciplinary paragraph on the decision of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference to assign an individual Bishop to two annual conferences across two jurisdictions. Specifically, is it permissible for a Bishop to be assigned to two annual conferences across two Jurisdictions and hold membership in two Colleges simultaneously? Is it permissible for a Bishop to be assigned to two annual conferences across two Jurisdictions and hold membership in only one College?” Vote 120 YES; 19 NO.



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CONSEIL JUDICIAIRE DE L'EGLISE METHODISTE UNIE
RECHTSHOF DER EVANGELISCH-METHODISTISCHEN KIRCHE
CONSELHO JUDICIAL DA IGREJA METODISTA UNIDA
CONSEJO DE LA JUDICATURA DE LA IGLESIA METODISTA UNIDA



Petition for Declaratory Decision

This form is to be used by the Secretary of the body authorized to petition the Judicial Council for a ruling in the nature of a declaratory decision as to the constitutionality, meaning, application, or effect of (please check one):

- The Book of Discipline 2016* or any portion thereof (§ 2610.1)
- any act or legislation of a General Conference (§ 2610.1)
- any proposed legislation (§ 2609.2)

Name of body authorized to make a Petition (§ 2610.2): Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference

Date of session: 07/12/2024 (month/day/year) Location: Pittsburgh, PA

Name of Secretary: Rev. Dr. Thomas L. Salsgiver

Address: 303 Mulberry Drive City: Mechanicsburg

State/Province: PA ZIP/Postal Code 17050 Country: USA

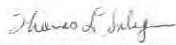
Phone: 717/766-7871 Fax: _____ E-mail: tsalsgiver@susumc.org

To be reviewed (indicate paragraph number, title of legislation and/or act where applicable):

Book of Discipline: Par. 48

Legislation: _____

Act of General Conference: _____

Signature:  Digitally signed by Thomas L. Salsgiver
Date: 2024.07.17 11:58:13 -04'00'

Secretary of the Conference/Body

Date: 07/17/2024

(month/day/year)

The following must be attached:

- Text of the written Petition for Declaratory Decision as originally presented
- Minutes of proceedings
- List of names and addresses of interested parties, including eu mail
- Other relevant materials (e.g. conference rules, resolutions, policies, reports)

➤ Send electronic copy of this form and all materials in PDF and Microsoft Word format to: **secretary@umcjudicialcouncil.org**

➤ Mail thirteen (13) sets of hard copies to:

**UMC Judicial Council, c/o LaNella Smith, Assistant to the J.C. Secretary,
1215 Shady Lane, Durham, NC 27712**

PLENARY 9
NORTHEASTERN JURISDICITON
MINUTES
JULY 12, 2024

Call to Order

Bishop John Schol called the session to order. He was assisted by Bishop Burgos-Nunez and Bishop Jane Middleton. Bishop Schol explained the work that is before the body and the short timeframe we have to complete it.

Bishop Schol gave two announcements. The College of Bishops met and elected a new president of the College of Bishops. Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi is the new president of the College. The College also announced the election of a secretary of the College of Bishops. Bishop Hector Burgos-Nunez is the new secretary.

Bishop Schol also introduced and welcomed Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett as we look forward to serving with you.

Bishop also thanked the persons who have been providing child care.

Bishop Schol invites the three committees to give their reports:

Credentials: The Credentials Committee reports that we have 151 delegates today.

Journal: The Journal Committee has reviewed the minutes and have found them in order.

Courtesies: The Courtesies Committee has nothing to report.

Bishop calls on Judi Kenaston, Chair of NEJ Committee on Episcopacy. The COE is charged with recommending the Episcopal areas names and assignments.

The committee affirms the discussion yesterday and will work with CONAM in naming Episcopal areas. We offer these interim names as placeholders as this important work continues.

The Committee on Episcopacy moves the recommendation of the following missional assignments and placeholder names for the Northeastern Jurisdiction

- Baltimore Washington & Peninsula Delaware area: Bishop LaTrelle Easterling
- Eastern Pennsylvania & Greater New Jersey area: Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi
- New England & New York area: Bishop Thomas Bickerton
- Susquehanna & Upper New York area: Bishop Hector Burgos Nunez
- West Virginia area: Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett
- Western PA area: Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball

There was a question regarding the names chosen with regards to the concern for Native lands Included in the names. It was explained that the current names are “placeholders” to give the areas a chance to confer with CONAM.

Vote was taken to approve the names of the Conference Areas and Episcopal Assignments:

YES – 127; NO – 9.

After the vote, Judi Kenaston wanted to acknowledge and thank the ongoing work of the Southeastern Jurisdiction and the Northeastern Jurisdiction. Wanted the body to know that the Southeastern Jurisdiction that they have approached this in a very gracious way.

One of the things the SEJ has adopted at their Jurisdictional Conference is that they will assume the cost of the office expenses for the Holston Conference. The entire GCFA funding for the Episcopal office will come to the NEJ.

We have two requests for Declaratory Decisions.

Bishop Schol reminds the people that the Declaratory Decision by Rev. Robert Zilhaver can be found on page 17 of Volume 22 of the DCA. Rev. Zilhaver is recognized by Bishop Schol and
“Moves on behalf the Committee on Episcopacy, to submit this Declaratory Decision found on page 17 of Volume 22 of the DCA.”

Bishop indicated that this is non-debatable.

Vote: YES – 127; No – 19. It passes and will be sent to the Judicial Council.

Bishop Schol recognized Becca Girrell, Clergy delegate from New England Annual Conference moved to request a Declaratory Decision. The wording for the Declaratory Decision can be found on page 14 of the July 12, 2024 DCA. The Declaratory Decision says:

“Under the provisions of ¶2610, the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference requests a Declaratory Decision on the constitutionality, meaning, application, and effect of ¶48 or any other constitutional or disciplinary paragraph on the decision of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference to assign an individual Bishop to two annual conferences across two Jurisdictions. Specifically, is it permissible for a Bishop to be assigned to two annual conferences across two Jurisdictions and hold membership in two Colleges simultaneously? Is it permissible for a Bishop to be assigned to two annual conferences across two jurisdictions and hold membership in only one College?”

Bishop Schol reminded the body that this is nondebatable. There was a second and Bishop Schol called for the vote.

YES – 100; NO – 39.

The motion passes and it will be sent to the Judicial Council

Bishop Schol gave further insight as to the difference between a Question of Law and Declaratory Decision. There are only certain bodies that can ask for a Declaratory Decision. The Jurisdictional Conference has standing to ask for a Declaratory Decision.

Bishop turned to the Secretary for announcements and two motions.

The Secretary moved:

“The Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference receives all reports printed in the DCA and said reports to be included in the journal”.

It was properly seconded.

Motion overwhelming passed with the raising of hands.

The Secretary moved:

“The 22nd Session of the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference be adjourned at the conclusion of the Service of Celebration, Anointing and Sending Forth.”

It was properly seconded.

Motion overwhelming passed with the raising of hands.

Bishop Jane Middleton closed the session with prayer.

2024 NEJ Petition for Declaratory Decision #3

Interested Parties

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