

2020 General Conference Guide

May 5-15, 2020
Minneapolis, Minnesota



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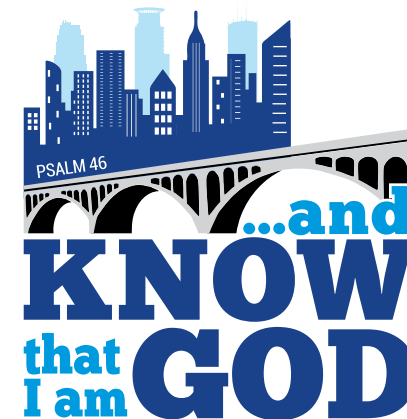
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Cover photo:
Rachael Sumner, delegate from the Florida Annual Conference, raises her arms in prayer during the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference in St. Louis. Seated behind her at left is the Rev. Sharon Austin, also a delegate from the Florida Conference.

Photo by Kathleen Barry, UM News.

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Letter from Daniel P.R. Krause



Dan Krause

Greetings!

In early May, 862 delegates from around the world and thousands of visitors will gather at the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minnesota for the 2020 General Conference.

Whether you are attending General Conference as a delegate, a communicator or an interested church member, I welcome you to this important event in the life of our denomination.

We designed this guide as a resource for you. It contains information about all aspects of your General Conference experience. You will find the agenda for the assembly, details of the legislative process and summaries of key issues. You'll also discover information on the history of The United Methodist Church, as well as overviews of its structure, membership and finances.

As in the past, this guide is available in multiple languages as we embrace our global connection. It also is available as a print edition and online at GC2020.umc.org.

You may also find that this guide will serve as a helpful reference when General Conference ends.

United Methodist Communications will be providing photos, daily news, feature stories, video interviews with key people and social media updates to help interested people follow the events and stay up-to-date.

I hope you will share information about the assembly with your annual conferences and local congregations and encourage them to watch via livestreaming video.

Peace and blessings,

Dan Krause
General Secretary
United Methodist Communications

Episcopal Welcome

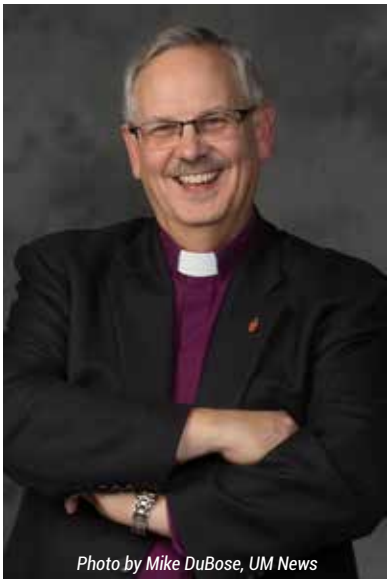


Photo by Mike DuBose, UM News

Bishop Bruce R. Ough

Greetings!

Grace and peace to you from God our creator and our Lord Jesus Christ. On behalf of all Minnesota and Dakotas United Methodists, I welcome you to Minneapolis for General Conference 2020.

It is our privilege and honor to host visitors from around the world, and to introduce you to this place we call home. Our Dakotas-Minnesota Area Host Team looks forward to showing you the best of what the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area has to offer. Hundreds of volunteers eagerly await the opportunity to greet you, help you find your way around, and recommend places to explore and dine. It is the hope of the Dakotas-Minnesota Area to provide radical hospitality — an environment where you feel safe and cared for as you meet with others at the Minneapolis Convention Center and discern where God is calling us as a denomination.

Minneapolis is known as the “City of Lakes.” It is situated on both banks of the Mississippi River and adjoins St. Paul, the state’s capital. These two “Twin Cities” form the 16th-largest metro area in the United States, with about 3.2 million residents. The city is abundantly rich in water with lakes and wetlands, the Mississippi riverfront, creeks and waterfalls. Minneapolis was once the world’s flour-milling capital and a hub for timber, and today is the primary business center between Chicago and Seattle. It is a diverse city, with a wide variety of ethnic groups and among the largest Hmong and Somali populations in the country. America’s most literate city, Minneapolis also has a vibrant arts scene.

It is my earnest hope that as we gather in this setting, we will witness the Holy Spirit breaking through. I encourage you to join me in praying daily for the Holy Spirit boldly to use each of us, and the 2020 General Conference, to make disciples of Jesus Christ and transform the world.

On behalf of all Minnesota and Dakotas United Methodists, we look forward to having you join us in Minneapolis as a delegate, a volunteer or a visitor. We look forward to welcoming you and to witnessing the power and presence of the Holy Spirit as one body of Christ.

Bishop Bruce R. Ough

Resident Bishop, Dakotas-Minnesota Area
The United Methodist Church



Event Site Map



PSALM 46
...and
KNOW
that I am **GOD**



2020 General Conference Schedule

REGISTRATION (ALL CATEGORIES)

Sunday, May 3	1:00–6:30 P.M.
Monday, May 4	7:00 A.M.–6:30 P.M.
Tuesday, May 5	7:00 A.M.–1:00 P.M. 4:00–6:30 P.M.

Registration will continue from 7:30 A.M.–6:30 P.M. each day except for Sunday, May 10.

AGENDA AND PROGRAM

Following is the overall program of the 2020 General Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Following the presentation and adoption of the report of the Commission on the General Conference at the opening session of the General Conference, the Committee on Agenda and Calendar shall immediately become responsible for guiding the order of business of the Conference.

All times listed are considered "Orders of the Day." Announcements will be held prior to the end of each Plenary as necessary.

Friday, May 1	
6:00 P.M.	Orientation for Interpreters

Saturday, May 2	
8:00 A.M.	Orientation for Central Conference Delegates
10:00 A.M.	Committee on Credentials

Sunday, May 3	
8:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.	Orientation for Central Conference Delegates
1:00 – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
3:00 P.M.	Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters
	Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision
	Orientation for Legislative Committee Recorders
6:00 P.M.	Orientation for Interpreters

Monday, May 4	
7:00 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
9:00 A.M.	Committee on Reference
	Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters
10:00 A.M.	Committee on Agenda and Calendar
1:00 P.M.	Committee on Courtesies and Privileges
	Committee on Presiding Officers
	Committee on the Journal
6:00 P.M.	Orientation for Heads of Delegations
	Orientation for Pages and Marshals

Tuesday, May 5	
7:00 A.M.–1:00 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
9:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Orientation for All Delegates
2:00 – 3:30 P.M.	Opening Worship
3:30 – 3:50 P.M.	Break
3:50 – 6:30 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Call to Order▶ Roll Call and Setting the Bar of the Conference▶ Emergency Procedures▶ Greeting from Minneapolis▶ The Role of Monitoring (5 minutes)▶ The Power of Communication (15 minutes)▶ Journey from 2016 to 2020 (15 minutes)▶ Speaker Recognition System Introduction▶ Testing the Voting System▶ Commission on the General Conference Report and Plan of Organization and Rules of Order▶ Elections<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Coordinator of the Calendar◦ Inter-jurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy◦ General Conference Administrative Committees▶ Report of the Committee on Agenda and Calendar
4:00 – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
5:00 P.M.	Daily Deadline for DCA Printing
6:30 P.M.	Adjournment



Wednesday, May 6	
7:00 A.M.	Committee on Agenda and Calendar
	Committee on Reference
7:30 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
8:00 – 8:30 A.M.	Worship
8:30 – 10:35 A.M.	Plenary Session Episcopal Address (45 minutes)
	Monitoring Report (3 minutes)
	Report on the Social Principles Revision (12 minutes) Nominations
10:35 – 10:55 A.M.	Break
10:55 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.	Plenary Session Young People's Address (30 minutes)
	General Book of Discipline Report and Dialogue (90 minutes)
1:00 – 2:30 P.M.	Lunch
2:30 – 4:30 P.M.	Organization of the Legislative Committees
4:30 P.M.	Dinner and Mandatory Leadership Training for Legislative Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs, Parliamentarians, Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Recorders, and Sub-Committee Chairs.
	Recess for All Others
5:00 P.M.	Daily Deadline for DCA Printing

Thursday, May 7	
7:00 A.M.	Committee on Agenda and Calendar
	Committee on Reference
7:30 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
8:00 – 8:45 A.M.	Worship
8:45 – 9:30 A.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Opening Prayer▶ Monitoring Report (3 minutes)▶ Laity Address (30 minutes)▶ Administrative Committee Reports
9:30 – 9:50 A.M.	Break
9:50 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.	Legislative Committees
12:30 – 1:30 P.M.	Lunch
1:30 – 4:00 P.M.	Legislative Committees
4:00 – 4:20 P.M.	Break
4:20 – 6:20 P.M.	Legislative Committees
5:00 P.M.	Daily Deadline for DCA Printing
6:20 – 6:30 P.M.	Evening Devotion (Legislative Committees)
6:30 P.M.	Adjournment

Friday, May 8	
7:00 A.M.	Committee on Agenda and Calendar Committee on Reference
7:30 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
8:00 – 8:45 A.M.	Worship
8:45 – 9:50 A.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Monitoring Report (3 minutes) ▶ Financial State of the Church (15 minutes) ▶ Connectional Table Report (20 minutes) ▶ Jurisdictional Study Committee Report (15 minutes) ▶ Administrative Committee Reports
9:50 – 10:10 A.M.	Break
10:10 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.	Legislative Committees
12:30 – 1:30 P.M.	Lunch
1:30 – 4:00 P.M.	Legislative Committees
4:00 – 4:20 P.M.	Break
4:20 – 6:20 P.M.	Legislative Committees
5:00 P.M.	Daily Deadline for DCA Printing
6:20 – 6:30 P.M.	Evening Devotion (Legislative Committees)
6:30 P.M.	Adjournment

Saturday, May 9	
7:00 A.M.	Committee on Agenda and Calendar Committee on Reference
7:30 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
8:00 – 8:45 A.M.	Worship
8:45 – 9:50 A.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Monitoring Report (3 minutes) ▶ Wespath – New Retirement Plan Overview (45 minutes) ▶ Administrative Committee Reports ▶ Consent Calendars
9:50 – 10:10 A.M.	Break
10:10 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.	Legislative Committees
12:30 – 1:30 P.M.	Lunch
1:30 – 4:00 P.M.	Legislative Committees
4:00 – 4:20 P.M.	Break
4:20 – 6:00 P.M.	Legislative Committees
5:00 P.M.	Daily Deadline for DCA Printing
6:00 – 7:30 P.M.	Dinner
7:30 – 9:20 P.M.	Legislative Committees
9:20 – 9:30 P.M.	Evening Devotion (Legislative Committees)
9:30 P.M.	Adjournment

Sunday, May 10	
Sabbath	
Monday, May 11	
6:30 A.M.	Committee on Agenda and Calendar
7:30 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
8:00 – 9:20 A.M.	Worship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Consecration of Deaconesses and Home Missioners for Lifetime Service
9:20 – 10:00 A.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Monitoring Report (3 minutes) ▶ Administrative Committee Reports ▶ Consent Calendars
10:00 – 10:20 A.M.	Break
10:20 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Voting Demonstration ▶ Elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Trustees of John Street Church ◦ Secretary-designate of the General Conference ◦ Commission on the General Conference ◦ General Agencies ◦ Judicial Council ◦ University Senate ◦ Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters
12:00 – 1:30 P.M.	Lunch
1:30 – 3:40 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Africa University Report (20 minutes) ▶ Higher Education and Ministry Report (20 minutes) ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
3:40 – 4:00 P.M.	Break
4:00 – 6:10 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Abundant Health Initiative Report (10 minutes) ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
5:00 P.M.	Daily Deadline for DCA Printing
6:10 – 6:30 P.M.	Evening Devotion
6:30 P.M.	Adjournment

Tuesday, May 12	
6:30 A.M.	Committee on Agenda and Calendar
7:30 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
8:00 – 9:30 A.M.	Worship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ecumenical Introductions (30 minutes)
9:30 – 10:00 A.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Monitoring Report (3 minutes) ▶ Administrative Committee Reports Consent Calendars
10:00 – 10:20 A.M.	Break
10:20 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
12:00 – 1:30 P.M.	Lunch
1:30 – 3:40 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Recognition of Retiring Bishops and Presentation of New Episcopal Leadership (10 minutes) ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
3:40 – 4:00 P.M.	Break
4:00 – 6:10 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ 80th Anniversary of UMCOR and Migrant Ministries (10 minutes) ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
5:00 P.M.	Daily Deadline for DCA Printing
6:10 – 6:30 P.M.	Evening Devotion
6:30 P.M.	Adjournment



Members of the Jefferson Dance Group help celebrate The United Methodist Church's Imagine No Malaria campaign May 18 at the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.

Photo by Paul Jeffrey, UM News.



Protestant prayer beads created for the 2016 United Methodist General Conference.

Photo by Kathleen Barry, United Methodist Communications

Wednesday, May 13	
6:30 A.M.	Committee on Agenda and Calendar
7:30 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
8:00 – 9:00 A.M.	Worship
9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Monitoring Report (3 minutes) ▶ Methodist Family Day (30 minutes) ▶ Administrative Committee Reports ▶ Consent Calendars
10:00 – 10:20 A.M.	Break
10:20 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
12:00 – 1:30 P.M.	Lunch
1:30 – 3:40 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ 100th Anniversary of the United Methodist Building (5 minutes) ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
3:40 – 4:00 P.M.	Break
4:00 – 6:10 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
5:00 P.M.	Daily Deadline for DCA Printing
6:10 – 6:30 P.M.	Evening Devotion
6:30 P.M.	Adjournment

Thursday, May 14	
6:30 A.M.	Committee on Agenda and Calendar
7:30 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
8:00 – 9:00 A.M.	Worship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Commissioning of Missionaries
9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Monitoring Report (3 minutes) ▶ Mission Bicentennial (15 minutes) ▶ Administrative Committee Reports Consent Calendars ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
10:00 – 10:20 A.M.	Break
10:20 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
12:00 – 1:30 P.M.	Lunch
1:30 – 3:40 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Recognition of New Judicial Council Members and those members completing their service ▶ Calendar Items & Conference
3:40 – 4:00 P.M.	Break
4:00 – 6:10 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
5:00 P.M.	Daily Deadline for DCA Printing
6:10 – 6:30 P.M.	Evening Devotion
6:30 P.M.	Adjournment

Friday, May 15	
6:30 A.M.	Committee on Agenda and Calendar
7:30 A.M. – 6:30 P.M.	Registration (all categories)
8:00 – 9:00 A.M.	Worship
9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Monitoring Report (3 minutes) Administrative ▶ Committee Reports GCFA Report ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business Announcements
10:00 – 10:20 A.M.	Break
10:20 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Plenary Session ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
12:00 – 1:30 P.M.	Lunch
1:30 – 3:40 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Recognition of General Conference Staff and Local Host Committee (25 minutes) ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
3:40 – 4:00 P.M.	Break
4:00 – 6:00 P.M.	Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Opening Prayer ▶ Calendar Items & Conference Business
6:00 – 6:30 P.M.	Closing Worship
6:30 P.M.	Final Adjournment



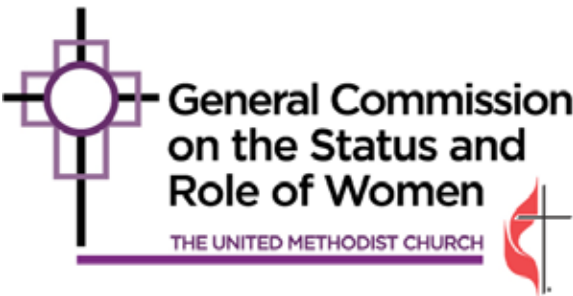
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The primary purpose of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women shall be to challenge The United Methodist Church...to a continuing commitment to the full and equal responsibility and participation of women in the total life and mission of the Church.

-2016 Book of Discipline ¶ 2102



Please access our General Conference legislation at www.gcsrw.org/GeneralConference/Legislation.aspx

Four bishops, surrounded by deacons, celebrate the Great Thanksgiving at the opening communion worship at the United Methodist 2016 General Conference in Portland, Ore.

Photo by Maile Bradfield, UM News.



A WORD ABOUT SCHEDULES

Because of the fluid nature of General Conference, it is impossible to tell exactly when delegates will discuss a particular issue. Even when an item is scheduled, it can be delayed if other issues have taken more time than expected. Items can also be added at the last minute if more time is available than expected.

A committee meets each night to plan the agenda for the next day. This proposed agenda appears in the early-morning Daily Christian Advocate. Even then, there is no guarantee that the schedule will be followed. Occasionally, delegates schedule an order of the day to discuss a particular subject in plenary sessions.



General Conference: An Overview

General Conference, the top legislative body of The United Methodist Church, meets May 5-15, 2020, at the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minnesota. The eco-focused center has 87 meeting rooms, a 3,400-seat auditorium and 475,000 square feet of exhibit space. Minneapolis is part of the Minnesota Annual Conference, which has more than 70,000 members and 350 congregations, and along with the Dakotas Conference constitutes the Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area of The United Methodist Church.

Some 862 delegates, elected from around the world, will gather to set policy and direction for the church, as well as handle other important business. Meeting every four years, General Conference is the only entity that speaks for the denomination. The United Methodist Book of Discipline, updated every four years, incorporates changes made by General Conference.

The theme of the 2020 General Conference is "... and know that I am God" from Psalm 46:10. The entire verse (NRSV) reads: "Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations. I am exalted in the earth." The verse number may vary in non-English translations.

United Methodist Communications designed the logo, which is used to maintain a consistent visual identity for the 2020 General Conference. The design incorporates a bridge and cityscape as a geographical nod to Minneapolis' beautiful bridges, lakes and waterfalls, along with the date and location.

The theme, suggested by the GC2020 Worship and Music team, was discussed and approved by the Commission on the General Conference. The team plans to create a new focus each day by pairing the theme with different words, such as "love" or "believe."

The Commission on the General Conference, led by Kim Simpson, a laywoman and delegate from the Central Texas Annual Conference, planned the conference. A local committee from the Minnesota Annual Conference, under the leadership of Bishop Bruce R. Ough of the Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area, is conference host. The Rev. James Haun, a retired elder from the Minnesota Conference, chairs the host committee. Some 7,000 people, many of them volunteers, will serve in a variety of roles, such as greeters, registration officials, marshals,

pages, translators, guides, drivers, musicians, technicians, reporters and emergency responders.

The General Administration Fund apportionments for General Conference pay for delegate expenses; operation costs (convention center and equipment rental, publishing, petition-tracking software, worship, labor); language services (printed translation of advance materials and spoken interpretation on site); expenses of the offices of the secretary, business manager and treasurer of the General Conference; and expenses of several commissions and committees in support of the event.

The changing global nature of the church is due in part to the rapidly growing membership in central conferences. The percentage of delegates from central conferences, which was 16% in 2000, has increased significantly since the start of this millennium. The percentage of delegates from central conferences for the most current four quadrenniums is 29% in 2008; 38%, 2012; 42%, 2016; and 44%, 2020. This change in representation has resulted in two of the four major cost drivers increasing significantly.

The budgeted cost of language and translation services in 2020 is \$1.45 million for oral interpretation and \$490,000 for written interpretation. In 2016, the average travel cost for delegates from within the United States was approximately \$765 for each delegate, while the average travel cost for delegates from central conferences was approximately \$3,365 each. As representation from central conferences grows because of growth in membership, so likewise does the cost of travel for delegates.

The Commission on the General Conference launched a ministry partner program for the 2012 General Conference with the intent of creating an income stream that may permit the payment of some of the accumulated costs. This program will continue through the 2024 General Conference. Ministry partnership net income (after expenses) provided in 2016 was approximately \$400,000 and is expected to be approximately \$725,000 in 2020.

Meeting in August 2019, the Commission on the General Conference approved a General Conference schedule that includes 22.3 hours for legislative committee work in the first week and 27.8 hours for legislative work during the second week's plenary sessions. Compared to the last regularly scheduled General Conference in 2016, that is 10

minutes less for legislative committee work and nearly three hours more for legislative work in the second week.

Each day of General Conference will begin with worship and adjourn at 6:30 p.m. CDT, with the exception of May 9, the last day of legislative committee work, which adjourns at 9:30 p.m.

One challenge the commission's program committee faced is accommodating groups that requested to speak before legislative committees were fully immersed in their work.

Most of these groups will be introducing legislation requested by earlier General Conferences, including work on the denomination's Social Principles, development of a more global Book of Discipline and a study of the number of U.S. bishops.

The first-week schedule also includes the Episcopal Address and the Young People's Address on May 6 and the Laity Address on May 7.

The commission also approved a budget that includes \$29 a day per diem for each delegate's meals. Lodging expenses will be paid directly to the hotel. Visitors will be asked to pay a voluntary \$10 registration fee each day they attend.

View of the stage during the 2019 United Methodist General Conference inside the Dome at America's Center in St. Louis.

Photo by Kathleen Barry, UM News





Follow the Sights and Sounds of General Conference 2020

Keeping up with the proceedings of General Conference is easy! Delegates and others can follow the proceedings on the General Conference website at gc2020.umc.org (or www.umc.org/gc2020). You can also follow General Conference on Facebook and Twitter using #UMCGC.

Features will include news coverage in multiple languages, with daily summaries and videos — such as interviews with delegates, volunteers and other key individuals.

All plenary sessions; worship services; the Episcopal, Laity and Young People's addresses; and other special events will be livestreamed. Archived versions of these will also be available for viewing.

Users can track petitions and obtain general information about the legislative process. Plenary transcripts and consent calendars will be posted each day.

Press releases will update users with official announcements about the conference, and the digital lounge will feature footage of press conferences and interviews held during the conference.

Resources such as frequently asked questions and background information will help members and others understand how General Conference works.

A daily schedule of events will be posted, as well as practical information for delegates and visitors, such as information about Minneapolis, the convention center and maps. Delegates can go to the website to find committee assignments, seating changes and the delegate list. Journalists can access background information on General Conference as well as credentialing procedures.

The 2020 General Conference will see changes in the Daily Christian Advocate, which will be fully digital and available through a Daily Christian Advocate website. The Advance Daily Christian Advocate will still be printed as well as items in the daily editions that need to be voted on, but the proceedings of the General Conference, delegate lists and news articles will be on the website only. Improvements to the website include highlighting items that are currently being discussed so they are easy to find.

The Site

The site of the international gathering has traditionally rotated among the church's five regional U.S. jurisdictions. Since 1968, General Conference has convened in the following cities:

- ▶ 1968 Dallas, Texas (uniting conference)
- ▶ 1970 St. Louis, Missouri (special session)
- ▶ 1972 Atlanta, Georgia
- ▶ 1976 Portland, Oregon
- ▶ 1980 Indianapolis, Indiana
- ▶ 1984 Baltimore, Maryland
- ▶ 1988 St. Louis, Missouri
- ▶ 1992 Louisville, Kentucky
- ▶ 1996 Denver, Colorado
- ▶ 2000 Cleveland, Ohio
- ▶ 2004 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- ▶ 2008 Fort Worth, Texas
- ▶ 2012 Tampa, Florida
- ▶ 2016 Portland, Oregon
- ▶ 2019 St. Louis, Missouri (special session)

The 2020 General Conference will be in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in the North Central Jurisdiction. Meeting in August 2019, the Commission on the General Conference decided that the 2024 General Conference would not be held in Manila, Philippines, as planned. The report of the executive session was that space was not available for the entire two weeks necessary and no bid was received from the facilities contacted in the bid process.

Financial considerations or the current church climate were not factors in the decision. Other cities are currently under consideration.



Inside the production truck, United Methodist Communications' Andrew Jensen works with the live camera angles videotaping the plenary floor of the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.

Photo by Kathleen Barry, UM News



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Opening Worship, Addresses, Other Special Events

General Conference will open at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, May 5, with a worship celebration that will include Holy Communion. The preacher will be Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey of the Louisiana Episcopal Area, president of the Council of Bishops.

The Episcopal Address by Bishop Hope Morgan Ward of the North Carolina Episcopal Area will be Wednesday, May 6, at 8:30 a.m. The Council of Bishops selected Ward to prepare and deliver the Episcopal Address on behalf of the entire council, composed of 67 bishops presiding over episcopal areas in the United States and central conferences. The council also includes retired bishops, which now number 92.

Later that morning, the Young People's Address will open the 10:55 a.m. plenary session. The speakers are Senesie Timothy Arounah Rogers, a law student at Fourah Bay College in Freetown, Sierra Leone; Alejandra Salemi, a graduate student at the University of Florida; and Brennan Hurley, a divinity student at Duke Divinity School, Durham, North Carolina. They will share their witness for the church. The address will also feature multimedia messaging, online before the General Conference and onsite, in order to advocate and amplify the voice of young people throughout the connectional system.

"The Young People's Address is always a highlight of General Conference," said Chris Wilterdink, director of Young People's Ministries for the denomination. "It is a chance for young people to declare boldly their hope for the future and the reality of the now, using honesty and transparency. It is a chance to speak life into the process of conferencing, so that potential harm can be both recognized and minimized."

The Laity Address will be part of the 8:45 a.m. plenary session on Thursday, May 7. Sharon Gregory, the president of the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders and Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference lay

leader, will be the main speaker. Supporting her will be five conference lay leaders from the U.S. jurisdictions and central conferences. The speakers were solicited from laity through a process of voluntary submissions. The Executive Committee of the Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders coordinated the speaker search.

Other special events include:

- ▶ Consecration of Deaconesses and Home Missioners for Lifetime Service, 8 a.m. worship, Monday, May 11;
- ▶ 80th anniversary of the United Methodist Committee on Relief and Migrant Ministries, 4 p.m. plenary, Tuesday, May 12;
- ▶ 100th anniversary of the United Methodist Building in Washington, D.C., 1:30 p.m. plenary, Wednesday, May 13;
- ▶ Commissioning of Missionaries, 8 a.m. worship, Thursday, May 14; and
- ▶ Mission Bicentennial, 9 a.m. plenary, Thursday, May 14.

Special reports published in the ADCA include New Proposed Social Principles, General Book of Discipline, Ministry Study, Interjurisdictional Committee Study, Full Communion with the Episcopal Church and a study on ecclesiology titled "Sent in Love."



Bishop Hope Morgan Ward presides over debate during the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.

Photo by Mike DuBose, UM News

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Key People

DELEGATES

Each U.S. annual conference elects equal numbers of lay and clergy delegates to General Conference, and every annual conference is guaranteed at least one lay and one clergy delegate.

The number of lay and clergy delegates for each annual conference to elect changes every four years (known as a quadrennium) based on the number of lay and clergy members. The Book of Discipline limits the total number of delegates to 1,000. Article I of Section II of the United Methodist Constitution mandates that the General Conference shall be composed of no fewer than 600 or more than 1,000 delegates, half clergy and half laity, to be elected by the annual conferences in an open and fair process. In 2020, 482 delegates (56% of the total) will come from annual conferences in the United States.

Groups of churches in Africa, Asia and Europe are central conferences. In 2020, central conferences will have 380 delegates. This is 20 delegates more than 2016. Of the central conference delegates, 278 (32% of the total) are from Africa, 40 from Europe and Eurasia (5%), 52 from the Philippines (6%) and 10 from "concordat" churches with which United Methodism has formal relationships (1%). These represent special covenant relationships with Methodist churches in Great Britain, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and the Caribbean and the Americas.

BISHOPS

All bishops, active and retired, attend General Conference but do not vote and may not speak in plenary sessions without permission from the assembly. Individual bishops preside over business sessions, customarily serving for one morning, afternoon or evening period. A General Conference Committee selects presiding bishops, and each presiding bishop selects a bishop colleague to serve as a parliamentarian.

CONFERENCE OFFICIALS

The secretary of the General Conference is the Rev. Gary Graves, a member of the Kentucky Annual Conference. The treasurer is Moses Kumar, general secretary of the General Council on Finance and Administration. Sara Hotchkiss, a staff executive with the General Council on Finance and Administration, is business manager. She is chief administrative officer of the Commission on the General Conference.

JUDICIAL COUNCIL

The United Methodist Judicial Council will meet to decide if questions related to constitutionality emerge during the conference. N. Oswald Tweh, a lay member of Monrovia, Liberia, and managing director of Pierre, Tweh and Associates in Monrovia, leads the council — the denomination's highest judicial body, or "court." The General Conference elects its nine members. The Judicial Council determines the constitutionality of acts or proposed acts of the General, jurisdictional, central and annual conferences. It acts on these either on appeal of lower rulings or through requests for declaratory decisions. It also rules on whether acts of other official bodies of the denomination conform to the Book of Discipline. This follows procedures established in the Discipline.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC DIRECTOR

The Commission on the General Conference selected Raymond Trapp as the worship and music director for the 2020 General Conference, a position he also held for the 2019 Special Session. In this role, he will develop the overall worship and music programming and provide musical leadership. Trapp also is director of music at Vanderveer Park United Methodist Church in Brooklyn, New York, and has served as music director for New York Annual Conference sessions for several years. "Raymond's ability to lead brings those around him to a spiritual place," said Sara Hotchkiss, General Conference business manager.

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

More than 7,000 visitors are expected for the duration of General Conference. These will include all members of the General Council on Finance and Administration and the Connectional Table. Chief executive officers of the 12 United Methodist general agencies will also attend. Members of the church and secular press will provide coverage. Numerous United Methodist members and other interested individuals will receive credentials to sit in the visitors' gallery.



Rosie Rios, a delegate from the California-Pacific Conference, holds an electronic candle as delegates are encouraged to "let your light shine before others" at the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.

Photo by Mike DuBose, UM News.



Main Tasks

As the top policymaking body of the global United Methodist Church, General Conference is the only entity that speaks for the 13.2-million-member denomination.

During the 11-day session, delegates will revise the Book of Discipline, which regulates the manner in which local churches, annual conferences and general agencies are organized. The Discipline includes policies regarding church membership, ordination, administration, property and judicial procedures. The assembly may modify most paragraphs by a simple majority vote, but amending the Constitution of The United Methodist Church requires a two-thirds affirmative vote, followed by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members

voting in annual conference sessions. Revoking or changing the Articles of Religion or Confession of Faith requires a two-thirds affirmative vote of the delegates, and three-fourths of the annual conference members must concur.

Delegates also revise the Book of Resolutions, a volume declaring the church's stance on social justice issues. The statements in the book are considered instructive and persuasive but are not binding on members.

In addition, the assembly approves plans and budgets for churchwide programs for the next four years and elects members of the Judicial Council and University Senate.



Bishops process into worship during the Special Session of the United Methodist General Conference in St. Louis.

Photo by Paul Jeffrey, UM News

Sources of Legislation

The primary sources of legislation are petitions and proposals from churches, agencies and organizations. Petitions must be submitted 210 days before the opening of the conference. Any organization, ordained minister or lay member of The United Methodist Church may petition the General Conference. Typically, about 1,000 petitions are submitted for consideration at a regularly scheduled General Conference.

The Rev. Abby Parker Herrera, General Conference petitions secretary, has the task of numbering each properly submitted petition and assigning it to one of 14 legislative committees or the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters.

The legislative committees deal with different subject matters and related sections in the Book of Discipline. The standing committee deals with proposals that affect United Methodist regions in Africa, Europe and the Philippines.

These committees are the first stop where legislation is debated, refined and possibly approved to go to the full General Conference plenary for a vote. If a plan has multiple petitions that deal with different sections of the Discipline, those petitions will first head to the committees that handle those sections.

The Committee on Agenda and Calendar can schedule petitions coming from multiple committees that need to be considered together, said the Rev. Gary Graves, General Conference secretary.

In addition, a Committee on Reference meets at the start of General Conference and considers requests to reassign petitions to different legislative committees.

The Book of Discipline requires all valid petitions to receive a vote in legislative committee, and all petitions approved by a legislative committee to receive a vote in plenary.

All proposed legislation — from individuals, organizations, churchwide agencies and annual conferences — is printed in the Advance Daily Christian Advocate. Once this document is distributed to elected delegates, the petitions are posted on the General Conference website.



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Legislative Committees

All 14 legislative committees of the General Conference will meet in the convention center. The meetings are open to everyone, including media representatives, though space may be limited. Names of people serving on each legislative committee appear in the Handbook for Delegates volume of the Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate.

The committees review, sort and refine legislative proposals. No action is final until approved by the General Conference in plenary session. Progress reports from each committee will appear in the next day's issue of the Daily Christian Advocate.

The 14 committees and their assigned topics are:

1. **CHURCH AND SOCIETY 1** – all petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of the General Board of Church and Society and the Social Principles, with the exception of paragraphs in the Book of Discipline dealing with "The Nurturing Community" (Par. 161), "The Social Community" (Par. 162) and "The World Community" (Par. 165).
2. **CHURCH AND SOCIETY 2** – all petitions and resolutions relating to "The Nurturing Community" and "The Social Community" sections of the Social Principles.
3. **CHURCH AND SOCIETY 3** – all petitions and resolutions relating to "The World Community" of the Social Principles.
4. **CONFERENCES** – all petitions and resolutions relating to the composition and activities of General, jurisdictional, annual, provisional, missionary and district conferences, as well as missions – including jurisdictional, annual and district connectional ministries or equivalent.
5. **DISCIPLESHIP** – all petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of Discipleship Ministries.
6. **FAITH AND ORDER** – all petitions relating to the work and concerns of the Committee on Faith and Order, the Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task, the Ministry of All Christians, and the Meaning of Ordination and Conference Membership.
7. **FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION** – all petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of the General Council on Finance and Administration, the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits

(Wespath) and the United Methodist Publishing House. The budget and recommendations prepared by GCFA are submitted to this committee for study and review. When GCFA presents its report to the General Conference for action, the committee presents its recommendations and may propose amendments.

8. **GENERAL ADMINISTRATION** – all petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of the Connectional Table. The Connectional Table report is submitted to this committee for study and review.
9. **GLOBAL MINISTRIES** – all petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of the General Board of Global Ministries.
10. **HIGHER EDUCATION/SUPERINTENDENCY** – all petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and schools of theology. In addition, the work and concerns of superintendency, the Council of Bishops Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships, including autonomous and affiliated autonomous Methodist churches, affiliated united churches and concordat relationships, and membership or relationship to the World Methodist Council, Councils and Consultations of Churches, and the American Bible Society.
11. **INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONS** – all petitions and resolutions relating to commissions on Archives and History, Communication, Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner, Religion and Race, Status and Role of Women, United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women.
12. **JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION** – all petitions and resolutions relating to judiciary concerns, the Judicial Civil Administration review committee, and investigations, trials and appeals.
13. **LOCAL CHURCH** – all petitions and resolutions relating to the organization of the local church and its membership, programs, boards, councils, commissions and committees. The committee also considers petitions relating to local church property.
14. **ORDAINED MINISTRY** – all petitions and resolutions relating to the work and concerns of ordained ministry.

Jay Horton helps bring forth the offering collected during the opening worship service of the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon, on May 10.

Photo by Paul Jeffrey, UM News.



Delegates select their committees within 30 days of their elections. Selections are made in order of election. Only conferences with more than 14 General Conference delegates will be allowed to have more than one person in a committee. Nearly all U.S. conferences will have either one or no delegates in a specific legislative committee.

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
CENTRAL CONFERENCE MATTERS**

The 43-member Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters is a permanent committee of General Conference. It serves as a coordinating body that studies the structure and supervision of The United Methodist Church in Africa, Asia and Europe. It also has the General Conference mandate to make recommendations related to the General Book of Discipline, and deals with legislative proposals affecting central conferences.

Recommendations by a legislative committee emerging the first week of the conference are just that – recommendations. No action is final until it has the approval of the entire General Conference. Delegates take most final actions during the second week. Final action by the General Conference is required of any statement that speaks for the denomination.

If a plenary session approves legislation that involves funding, that action is referred to GCFA and the Connectional Table (or their committees or expenditure review groups) for advice and review. The groups bring the legislation back to the assembly with specific recommendations about sources and amounts. When GCFA and the Connectional Table present their report, the Financial Administration Legislative Committee may propose amendments to those recommendations and present its own recommendations. Only after the conference acts on this funding proposal does the legislation take effect.

If two-thirds of General Conference delegates approve a proposed change in the church's constitution, that action must be ratified by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of annual conference members voting at their yearly gatherings. A proposal to alter one of the Articles of Religion or the Confession of Faith requires a three-fourths majority of annual conference members. No changes may occur until the Council of Bishops announces ratification.

Most legislation becomes effective Jan. 1, 2021, unless the legislation specifies another date.

Tracking Legislation

Following the progress of legislation through the General Conference process can be a challenge. Most issues come before delegates in the form of petitions sent by individuals, groups, annual conferences and governing bodies of general agencies. These appear in the Advance Daily Christian Advocate and on the General Conference website, <http://gc2020.umc.org>.

Each petition from an individual, local church, annual conference, general agency or other group receives a number and is assigned to a legislative committee. Each delegate serves on a committee and spends most of the first four days of General Conference in committee meetings.

Each legislative committee deals with petitions related to a series of paragraphs from the Book of Discipline. Petitions related to the Book of Resolutions are sorted by subject.

A legislative committee can recommend adoption, rejection or referral of a petition to a plenary session. That recommendation is called a "calendar item." The item is assigned a number and published on the Daily Christian Advocate website, www.dailychristianadvocate.org, and will also be printed for delegates.

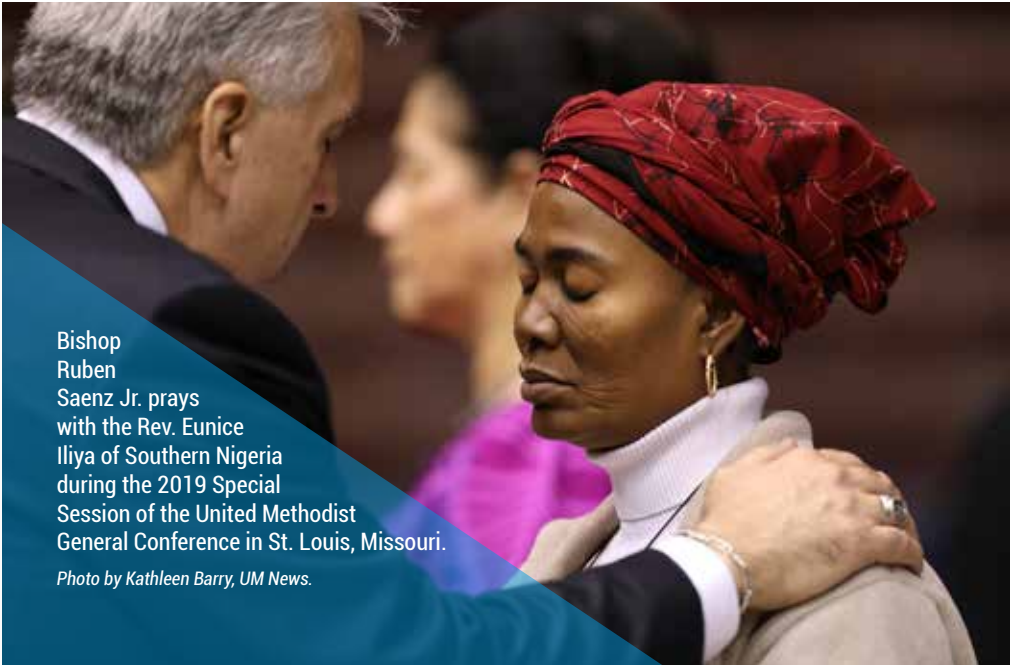
If a proposal has no financial implications, seeks no change in the constitution and receives fewer than 10 negative votes in the legislative committee, it goes on a "consent calendar." A vote of 20 delegates is needed to remove it from the consent calendar. If it is not removed, it is voted on with other noncontroversial items, which conserves precious floor time in the plenary session.

To summarize the legislative process:

- ▶ Annual conferences, local churches, general agencies and other organizations and individuals submit petitions.
- ▶ The petitions secretary (Abby Parker Herrera for 2020) assigns a petition number to each. The number indicates the legislative committee, chronological order and source. Each petition is assigned to a legislative committee.
- ▶ Petitions are printed in the Advance Edition of the Daily Christian Advocate.
- ▶ A reference committee reviews assignments by the petitions secretary. The committee combines petitions and makes new assignments to legislative committees as necessary.
- ▶ Legislative committees review petitions and make recommendations to the plenary session.
- ▶ Reports are sent to the Daily Christian Advocate. A copy is returned to committee officers for approval and sent to the General Conference secretary for a calendar number prior to printing in the Daily Christian Advocate.
- ▶ Delegates in plenary session act upon the calendar item.
- ▶ Adopted legislation is printed in the Book of Discipline or the Book of Resolutions. The Daily Christian Advocate becomes the official journal of General Conference.



Bishops join hands in prayer during worship at the 2019 Special Session of the United Methodist General Conference in St. Louis.
Photo by Kathleen Barry, UM News.



Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr. prays with the Rev. Eunice Iliya of Southern Nigeria during the 2019 Special Session of the United Methodist General Conference in St. Louis, Missouri.
Photo by Kathleen Barry, UM News.



Major Issues

While, for many United Methodists, the structure and sexuality debate appears paramount in General Conference 2020 discussions, a number of other major issues also face the denomination as preparations continue for the May 5-15 event.

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

As of November 2019, at least four groups had submitted proposals addressing the denomination's future. In addition, individual proposals had been submitted. The extent of the legislation would not become known until the Advance Daily Christian Advocate's publication in early 2020, but an overview of the four group proposals is provided here.

In alphabetical order, these include:

- ▶ [New Denominations of United Methodism \(The Indianapolis Plan\)](#), submitted by the Rev. Kent Millard and assembled by a group of centrists, traditionalists and progressives. This plan includes provisions for separating into different denominations depending on views around homosexuality.
- ▶ [New Expressions Worldwide](#), submitted by UMFoward, a group of clergy and laity promoting supporting full LGBTQ inclusion. This proposal would dissolve The United Methodist Church, effective at the close of the 2020 General Conference, and create four global denominations: traditionalist, moderate, progressive and liberationist. The denominations would divide general church assets equitably and each determine their own policies and structure.
- ▶ [Next Generation UMC](#), assembled by UMCNext, a group of centrists and progressives. This proposal lifts restrictions related to gay ordination and same-sex weddings, while allowing local churches that disagree to depart and organize into new forms of Methodism.
- ▶ [Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation*](#), submitted by a 16-member group of United Methodist bishops and other leaders. The proposal would preserve The United Methodist Church while allowing traditionalist-minded congregations to form a new denomination. The separating group would get \$25 million in United Methodist funds and would keep its local church properties. Another \$2 million will be held in escrow should additional separate denominations form.

- ▶ [U.S. Regional Conference](#), submitted by the Connectional Table. The proposal leaves the denomination intact but creates an organizational structure for the U.S. to have parity with existing central conferences for doing work on the adaptable portions of the Book of Discipline.

These plans were drafted in the United States. However, this is not a comprehensive list of the options that will be before the delegates to reorganize or divide the denomination and its assets.

Other proposals coming to General Conference 2020 include legislation to add [five more bishops to Africa](#), revise [the Social Principles](#), create [a new structure for U.S. decision-making](#) and establish [the 2021-24 general church budget](#). All four of these proposals were drafted by international church bodies.

NEW AFRICAN BISHOPS

A United Methodist leadership body unanimously backed a plan that both changes the church's map in Africa and adds five new bishops to the denomination's fastest-growing region.

The Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters is proposing legislation that, starting in 2021, [adds a new central conference to the continent and increases the number of African bishops from 13 to 18](#).

Establishing a new central conference requires a two-thirds majority vote at General Conference. The delegates, by a simple majority, also determine the number of bishops the denomination will fund.

The African continent currently [has three central conferences](#) — Africa, Congo and West Africa. Each includes multiple countries and languages.

The standing committee's legislation renames the Congo Central Conference as the Central Africa Central Conference and splits in two the Africa Central Conference — so named because it is the oldest on the continent.

Ultimately, the General Conference will determine the boundaries of central conferences and the number of bishops who serve them.

Individual central conferences will decide the boundaries of episcopal areas and where bishops are assigned.

SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

The United Methodist Board of Church and Society will bring legislation for a full revision of the Social Principles — the first such overhaul in nearly 50 years. The goal is for the statements that guide United Methodist public witness to be more succinct, more theologically grounded and more globally relevant.

The proposed changes are eight years in coming. The 2012 General Conference referred legislation from the denomination's three central conferences in Europe to revise the Social Principles.

Church and Society held listening sessions around the globe to learn from United Methodists what they thought of the social teachings and how they might be improved. Then, six international writing teams, assigned to the six sections of the Social Principles, worked on the draft.

The Africa University touring choir sings during the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.

Photo by Kathleen Barry, UM News.

*Editor's note: The list of plans also includes the [U.S. Regional Conference](#) proposal, submitted by the Connectional Table. While this proposal leaves the denomination intact, it would entail a structural change and so was included with the other major plans that could affect the church's future.

U.S. STRUCTURE

The Connectional Table, working closely with Wespath, is proposing a two-step process to create a new decision-making body for U.S. matters. Wespath is the name under which the United Methodist Board of Pension and Health Benefits does business.

Creating a U.S. Regional Conference would be done in two stages:

Stage I would form a committee of the General Conference, with legislative function, to deal with U.S. Region – adaptable disciplinary provisions, U.S.-related resolutions and non-disciplinary petitions concerning U.S. matters.

Stage II would form the U.S. Regional Conference, and the Stage I committee would end its work.

Judi Kenaston, who led the Connectional Table subcommittee that drafted the proposal, made it clear in April 2019 that the goal is not to skirt General Conference's votes on same-sex weddings and gay ordination.

Instead, she said, the Connectional Table's goal is to have a place for United Methodists to vote on clergy pensions, retirement plans, property matters, resolutions and other initiatives that solely affect the United States – and remove some of the burden from General Conference to deal with these matters.

2021-24 GENERAL CHURCH BUDGET

As of September 2019, the General Council on Finance and Administration was proposing a \$493.8 million budget – the smallest in more than 20 years. According to the Commission on Archives and History, the last time General Conference approved a budget below \$500 million was in 1992.

The finance agency board and the Connectional Table jointly approved allocations to the budget that would see cuts to agency budgets ranging from 15.5% to 35%. The deepest cut of 88% would be to the Interdenominational Cooperation Fund, which supports ecumenical work.

The budget still could face further adjustments before heading to General Conference, depending on financial forecasts for the denomination in February 2020. Also, since the special General Conference, giving to the general church has declined steeply.

In August 2018, the board of the General Council on Finance and Administration unanimously approved changes in the formula used in calculating U.S. apportionments – the requested giving from U.S. annual conferences.

The board made the changes based on the recommendations of the Apportionment Sustainability Task Force, which has been examining the ramifications of long-term trends on the denomination's financial future.

The task force focused on the denomination's shrinking worship attendance and membership in the United States. While the multinational denomination is growing overall, U.S. United Methodists still provide more than 90% of the funding for general church operations worldwide.



Opening worship at the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.
Photo by Kathleen Barry, UM News

ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

The Council of Bishops is asking General Conference to agree to full communion with a denomination that, like The United Methodist Church, has historic ties to John Wesley's Church of England. Also, like The United Methodist Church, The Episcopal Church has experienced its own divisions around the role of LGBTQ Christians in church life.

Full communion means each church acknowledges the other as a partner in the Christian faith, recognizes the validity of each other's baptism and Eucharist, and commits to work together in ministry. Such an agreement also means Episcopalians and United Methodists can share clergy.

The Council of Bishops is recommending a change in Paragraph 442 of the Discipline to reflect a wider range of The United Methodist Church's full-communion partnerships and to bring the terminology into harmony with that used by our ecumenical partners. The petition changes the name of full-communion consulting bodies from "joint commissions" to "coordinating committees," introduces changes in the way such bodies are populated, and creates options for such committees to combine with others or suspend meeting for a season.

The council also recommends an amendment that would give further expression to the ecumenical and interreligious responsibilities of United Methodist bishops, adding the following sentence: "Bishops are to model a spirit of ecumenical and interreligious cooperation and lead their areas in establishing relationships of peace, reconciliation and understanding across lines of denominational and religious differences."

Other recommendations include replacing the "autonomous Methodist church" category with new terms and changing the term "affiliated autonomous Methodist churches" to "affiliated Methodist churches."

An amendment to Paragraph 419.1 would clarify the ecumenical and interreligious role and responsibilities of district superintendents as extensions of the general superintending office of the bishop.

- The council also recommends the following:
- ▶ Renew the teaching statement "By Water and the Spirit: A United Methodist Understanding of Baptism" in the Book of Resolutions;
 - ▶ Renew the teaching statement "This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion" in the Book of Resolutions;
 - ▶ Revise and readopt Resolution 3125, "Holocaust Memorial Day (Yom HaShoah);
 - ▶ Adopt the report from the Committee on Faith and Order, "Sent in Love: A United Methodist Understanding of the Church," as an official doctrinal teaching statement of The United Methodist Church;
 - ▶ Update policies related to the Interdenominational Cooperation Fund to reflect the full range of ministries; and
 - ▶ Update the name of the "Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships" to the "Advisory Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relationships."



Bishops Joaquina Filipe Nhanala (left) and Debra Wallace-Padgett bless the elements of Holy Communion during a worship service sponsored by the Commission on the Status and Role of Women during the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.
Photo by Mike DuBose, UM News.

CLERGY FOCUS

The Commission on the Study of Ministry, in consultation with the Committee on Faith and Order, is submitting a report on a theological framework for ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church. The commission proposes leading a churchwide conversation about the meaning of ordination and other questions about the tradition and practice of ministry addressed in the report, then offering legislation to the 2024 General Conference that will bring the church's polity related to licensed and ordained clergy into alignment with the church's understanding of a theology of ordained ministry.

The United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry is introducing several pieces of legislation related to ministry to the 2020 General Conference. That legislation includes two petitions that for the first time allow associate members to serve in a conference other than their home conference and also to transfer to a different conference.

RESPONSES TO SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women is introducing a resolution calling for an "Apology from General Conference to the Victims/Survivors of Sexual Misconduct in The United Methodist Church." Many victims/survivors of sexual misconduct, the commission noted, do not receive an apology from any person with authority in the denomination or from the institution itself. An apology is the first step to the process of healing, especially for victims/survivors who cannot file a complaint due to time limits. The resolution is being submitted as more attention is being focused on this issue through the #MeToo and #ChurchToo movements.

The commission is also requesting an update to an existing resolution on "Sexual Misconduct Within Ministerial Relationships." The resolution would note that "sexual abuse, misconduct, and harassment in ministerial roles cause great harm to all parties involved and the witness of the Church. It is critical that The United Methodist Church has proper accountability when sexual abuse, misconduct, or harassment occur and has committees and structures to prevent and address such behaviors."

STUDENTS AND SPECIAL SUNDAYS

Under legislation proposed by the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry, United Methodist Student Day would be observed any Sunday in May, instead of the traditional observance the Sunday after Thanksgiving. The move allows churches to coordinate observation of the Special Sunday with offerings with student graduation celebrations. The offerings support scholarships for United Methodist students.

The board also proposed legislation that would allow offerings for Native American Ministries Sunday to support Native Americans pursuing licensed ministry through Course of Study.

TREATMENT OF GIRLS AND WOMEN

Three general agencies have submitted legislation ranging from discrimination against women, sexual misconduct and support for clergywomen to treatment of women as objects, advocacy for the girl child and global equality for women.

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women is introducing legislation that would add the word "gender" to the list of people who cannot be discriminated against for membership in The United Methodist Church.

United Methodist Men is asking delegates to update a resolution supporting clergywomen. The statement acknowledges that United Methodist congregations "have not always welcomed the appointment of clergywomen and provided them with support following their appointment." The resolution urges UMM organizations to welcome women to the pulpit and to participate in the studies and activities of local UM Men organizations.

UMM worked with the YWCA of Middle Tennessee to create "Amending through Faith," an eight-week study designed to help men understand how their attitudes have created an environment that treats women as objects and tolerates abusive actions. Commission members asked General Conference to include this resource in a listing of actions designed to "engage men and boys as allies in the promotion of gender equality."

In legislation titled "The Girl Child," United Methodist Women calls the church to engage in advocacy to rectify conditions that limit girls from reaching their fullest potential in healthy environments.

A second piece of UMW legislation, "The Status of Women: Towards Realizing Human Rights for All Women," urges the church to work for women's global equality in education, health, violence against women and other issues.

Bishop Christian Alsted preaches during the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.

Photo by Paul Jeffrey, UM News.



YOUNG PEOPLE'S MINISTRIES

Discipleship Ministries recently completed a rigorous, three-year process to create a more holistic, integrated and focused approach in assisting United Methodist leaders in their disciple-making efforts.

Included in the agency's General Conference legislation is a petition that updates and simplifies the language and structure of the Division on Ministries with Young People by renaming it the "Young People's Connectional Network."

The petition calls jurisdictions to develop creative partnerships to network youth, young adults and young people's ministries; support young people's ministries in the annual conferences; and provide a more inclusive process by which representatives are chosen for the Young People's Connectional Network.

Jurisdictional young people's ministries also initiate and support camps, conferences and workshops; recommend priorities, concerns and policies to the Young People's Connectional Network; promote the establishment and awareness of the concerns of racial and ethnic individuals through caucuses, camps and consultations; and promote the spiritual growth of participants in young people's ministry events and activities. Other responsibilities include promoting evangelistic outreach with and through young people by providing educational opportunities and resources that increase awareness, exposure and engagement in mission, social justice, discipleship, leadership development and spiritual formation; providing training and supportive experiences for conference young people's ministries personnel; and enabling communication between general and conference levels of young people's ministries.

OLDER ADULT CONCERNS

Two resolutions from Discipleship Ministries focus on older adult concerns.

According to the U.S. Social Security Administration, the number of people age 65 and older has grown from 3.1 million in 1900 (4% of the total population) to 47.8 million in 2015 (14.9%). By 2040, that number will increase to about 82.3 million.

Faith communities are "graying" rapidly. The resolution notes, "Being old today is not easy, in either the church or society. If the situation of older persons is to be improved, the church must act. ... The response of the church begins with a theological understanding of aging concerned with the whole life process rather than with only its final stages. The meaning of life, rather than death, is the central point from which to theologize about aging.

"Concern for older persons in the church is theologically grounded in the doctrine of Creation, in the meaning of God's work in Christ, in the response to grace that leads us into service, in the continuing value of older persons in the larger mission, and in the nature of the church as an agent of redemption and defender of justice for all.

"The aging process is part of God's plan for life, with the good news of Christ's redemption giving hope and purpose. United Methodists are called to live this message through words and deeds in the church and in society."

The resolution titled "Abuse of Older Adults" notes the increasing numbers of older adults abused in the U.S. and around the world. "Elder abuse and neglect," it says, "take many forms." The resolution calls on The United Methodist Church "to break the silence and to address this social ill through education and awareness, information, counseling and referral services, support systems, and reports to the proper authorities when abuse is suspected," and it calls on the Committee on Older Adult Ministries and appropriate general agencies to provide resources and materials to address the issue.

WESPATH

In 2018, Wespeth Benefits and Investments announced that in preparing for the denomination's uncertain future, the agency was taking steps to make sure conferences could meet their pension obligations without disruption.

Among other tasks, the agency manages investments for pensions and other retirement-plan assets on behalf of conferences, which are plan sponsors and legally responsible for paying benefits. In addition, the agency manages assets for more than 100 other United Methodist-related institutions.

As of 2018, Wespeth was looking at proposing changes to the clergy retirement program at the 2020 General Conference.

Specifically, Wespeth wants to move active clergy from a plan that combines both defined-benefit and defined-contribution components to one that is entirely based on defined contribution.

A defined-benefit plan provides a monthly pension payment for life, with the employer (in this case, conferences) assuming the investment risk. A defined-contribution plan — like the 401(k) plans most U.S. corporate employees now have — provides an account balance to use during retirement, with the clergyperson assuming the risk of sustaining the money through the end of his or her lifetime.



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History of the Church

The union of the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist churches formed The United Methodist Church in 1968.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church, established in 1946, represented the union of two U.S.-born denominations: the Evangelical Church and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Both originated among German-speaking people in the colonies during the great spiritual awakening of the late 18th century.

The two fellowships and the Methodist Church were similar, particularly in terms of church polity and evangelistic zeal.

Jacob Albright, a lay preacher in eastern Pennsylvania, gathered followers in the early 1800s. These “Albright people” formed the Evangelical Association, later to become the Evangelical Church. The Rev. Philip Otterbein, ordained by the German Reformed Church, started the United Brethren movement in the late 1700s.

Meanwhile, the Methodist movement, which had begun in England in the early 1700s under Anglican clergyman John Wesley and his followers, had spread to Ireland and the colonies. Wesley did not officially organize a new church, but sparked a renewal movement within the Church of England.

Methodist classes and congregations met in the United States beginning in the 1760s. Around Christmas 1784, some 60 ministers gathered in Baltimore and organized the Methodist Episcopal Church. The word “episcopal” refers to the church’s administration by bishops. The denomination, which grew rapidly, was known for its circuit-rider pastors on the frontier.

In the late 18th century, racism in the church caused some groups of African American Methodists to leave and form their own denominations, the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion. In 1870, another division in the parent church led to the

creation of a third black Methodist denomination, known today as the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

As the church continued to grow, philosophical differences and division were inevitable. In 1830, a group insisting on lay representation in church government separated and became the Methodist Protestant Church.

In 1844, the Methodist Episcopal Church split over the issue of slavery. The offspring denomination was the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The north and south churches reunited in 1939, compromising on the race issue by creating a segregation system. The Methodist Protestant Church was part of the merger. Alongside the five geographic jurisdictions, an overlapping Central Jurisdiction was formed for African Americans. The 1968 merger of the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren churches dissolved the Central Jurisdiction.

CENTRAL CONFERENCES

Outside the U.S., annual conferences are organized into seven central conferences. Central conferences were first established in the Methodist Episcopal Church in Asia (India in 1885 and China in 1897), then in Europe (1908), and in Africa and Latin America in the 1920s.

In the 1930s and 1960s, for a variety of reasons, many annual conferences outside the U.S. became autonomous (independent and self-governing), particularly in most regions of Asia and in all of Latin America. Most of these autonomous churches are affiliated autonomous or affiliated united churches with The United Methodist Church and send non-voting delegates to General Conference.

Since the early 1970s, membership in the central conferences has increased tremendously, and the number of members now far exceeds those of the 1920s and 1960s.



Bishops retiring from active service gather to be recognized by the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon. From left are Bishops Larry M. Goodpaster, Jane Allen Middleton, Michael J. Coyner, Ntambo Nkulu Ntanda, Lindsey Davis and Jonathan D. Keaton.

Photo by Mike DuBose, UM News.

Membership

Membership in The United Methodist Church worldwide grew to more than 13.2 million in 2017, due predominantly to increases in Africa, Europe and Asia, where membership rose from nearly 4.4 million in 2009 to 6.4 million in 2017. U.S. membership declined in the same period, from nearly 7.7 million to slightly more than 6.8 million.



Worship leaders bless the elements of Holy Communion during opening worship May 10 at the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.

Photo by Mike DuBose, UM News

African delegates to The United Methodist Church's General Conference 2016 gather at Canby Retreat Center in Portland, Ore. The United Methodist Church Africa Initiative hosted the meeting.

Photo by the Rev. Jerry Kulah





Statistics of The United Methodist Church

UNITED STATES

(Sources: General Council on Finance and Administration 2014
Statistical Review of The United Methodist Church)

2017 Lay Members6,806,331

African American/Black	421,101
Hispanic	9,003
Native American	21,064
Asian American	91,808
Pacific Islander	14,613
White (Non-Hispanic)	6,112,699
Multiracial	66,043

2017 Clergy Members37,009

African American/Black	2,675
Hispanic	708
Native American	175
Asian American	1,199
Pacific Islander	117
White (Non-Hispanic)	31,650
Multiracial	485

Women Clergy10,973

Deacons	1,430
Diaconal Ministers	130
Active	31,021
Retired (under appointment)	2,486

Active Bishops..... 46

African American/Black	9
Hispanic/Latino	3
Asian American	5
White	29

Active Women Bishops 16

Retired Bishops (All Nations) 92

2017 Organized Churches31,299

2017 Average Weekly Worship Attendance2,558,622

2017 Annual Conferences 56

2018 Annual Conferences 54

EDUCATION

(Source: General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 2019)

Two-year Colleges	2
Four-year Colleges and Universities	88
Theological Schools	13
Professional Schools	1
Pre-collegiate Schools	8

2020 DELEGATE COUNT

North Central

Dakotas	2
Detroit	6
East Ohio	12
Illinois Great Rivers	10
Indiana	16
Iowa	12
Minnesota	2
Northern Illinois	6
West Michigan	2
West Ohio	14
Wisconsin	6

Northeastern

Baltimore-Washington.....	12
Eastern Pennsylvania	8
Greater New Jersey	8
New England	6
New York	6
Peninsula-Delaware	4
Susquehanna	12
Upper New York	10
West Virginia	6
Western Pennsylvania	12

South Central

Arkansas.....	8
Central Texas	8
Great Plains	14
Louisiana	6
Missouri.....	12
New Mexico	2
North Texas	8
Northwest Texas	2
Oklahoma	14
Oklahoma Indian Missionary	2
Rio Texas	8
Texas	18



Members of the Worship in Motion dance ensemble process during a worship service at the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon. The group is from the Federal Way United Methodist Church in Auburn, Washington.

Photo by Paul Jeffrey, UM News.

Southeastern

Alabama-West Florida	8
Florida	16
Holston	12
Kentucky	10
Memphis	4
Mississippi	10
North Alabama	8
North Carolina	16
North Georgia	22
Red Bird Missionary	2
South Carolina	16
South Georgia	8
Tennessee	8
Virginia	22
Western North Carolina	20

Western

Alaska (Missionary)	2
California-Nevada	6
California-Pacific	6
Desert Southwest	2
Oregon-Idaho	2
Pacific Northwest	2
Rocky Mountain	4
Yellowstone	2

Africa Central

Burundi	6
East Zimbabwe	4
Eastern Angola	2
Kenya-Ethiopia	2
Malawi Provisional	2
Mozambique North	2
Mozambique South	4
Rwanda Provisional	2
South Africa Provisional	2
Uganda-South Sudan	2
West Zimbabwe	4
Western Angola	8

Central and Southern Europe

Austria Provisional	2
Bulgaria-Romania Provisional	2
Czech and Slovak Republics	2
Hungary Provisional	2
Poland	2
Serbia-Macedonia Provisional	2
Switzerland-France-North Africa	2

Congo

Central Congo	6
East Congo	16
Kasai	2
Kivu Provisional	2
Lukoshi	14
North Katanga	50
North-West Katanga	10
Oriental and Equator	4
South Congo	14
South-West Katanga	10
Tanganyika	10
Tanzania	6
West Congo	2
Zambia	6

Germany

Germany East	2
Germany North	2
Germany South	2

Northern Europe and Eurasia

Central Russia	2
Denmark	2
Eastern Russia and Central Asia Provisional	2
Estonia	2
Finland-Finnish Provisional	2
Finland-Swedish Provisional	2
Northwest Russia Provisional	2
Norway	2
South Russia Provisional	2
Ukraine and Moldova	2

Philippines

Bicol Philippines Provisional	2
Bulacan Philippines	2
Central Luzon Philippines	2
East Mindanao Philippines	2
Hundred Islands Philippines	2
Middle Philippines	2
Mindanao Philippines	2
North Central Philippines	2
Northeast Luzon Philippines	2
Northeast Philippines	2
Northern Philippines	2
Northwest Mindanao Philippines	2
Northwest Philippines	2
Palawan Philippines	2
Pampango Philippines	2
Pangasinan Philippines	2
Philippines	2
Philippines Cavite	2
Quezon City	2
Rizal Philippines East	2
South Nueva Ecija Philippines	2
Southern Tagalog Philippines Provisional	2
Southwest Philippines	2
Tarlac Philippines	2
Visayas Philippines	2
West Middle Philippines	2

West Africa

Central Nigeria	6
Côte d'Ivoire	32
Liberia	18
North East Nigeria	6
Northern Nigeria	2
Sierra Leone	14
Southern Nigeria	8

Concordat

Caribbean and the Americas	2
Great Britain	4
Mexico	2
Puerto Rico	2

SUMMARY

North Central	88
Northeastern	84
South Central	102
Southeastern	182
Western	26
Africa Central	40
Congo	152
West Africa	86
Central and Southern Europe	14
Germany	6
Northern Europe and Eurasia	20
Philippines	52
Concordat	10

TOTAL **862**

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Structure of the Denomination

THE CHURCH AS CONNECTION

United Methodist leaders often speak of the denomination as “the connection.” This concept has been central to Methodism from its beginning. The United Methodist structure and organization began as a means of accomplishing the mission of spreading scriptural holiness. Methodism’s founder, John Wesley, recognized the need for an organized system of communication and accountability and developed what he called the “connexion,” a network of classes, societies and annual conferences.

Today, our denomination continues its organization in a “connectional” system. Every local church links to an interconnected network of organizations that join in mission and ministry, allowing us to accomplish far more than any one local church or person could alone.

Within the connectional structure of The United Methodist Church, conferences provide the primary groupings of people and churches for discernment and decision-making. Wesley described Christian conferencing as a spiritual discipline through which God’s grace may be revealed. At every level of the connection, church leaders and members come together in conversation, or conferencing, to discuss important issues and discover God’s will for the church. The word “conference” thus refers to both the assembly and organization of people as well as the process of discerning God’s call together.

The United Methodist Church does not have a central headquarters or a single executive leader. Duties are divided among bodies that include the General Conference, the Council of Bishops and the Judicial Council. Our Constitution, a foundational document, requires each of these entities to be part of our structure and to play a significant role in the life of the church.

LOCAL CHURCHES AND DISTRICTS

As the visible presence of the body of Christ, the local church is where members grow in faith and discipleship, putting their faith into action through ministry in the world. Each local church is part of a district, an administrative grouping of churches in a geographic area. A charge conference governs each local church with a church council as the year-round supervisor. The church council plans and implements the programs and ministry of the local church, as well as oversees the administration of the church.

ANNUAL CONFERENCES

Districts group into annual conferences, regional bodies that meet yearly for legislative purposes. Annual conferences approve ministry and mission, programs and budgets; elect delegates to General, central and jurisdictional conferences, and examine and recommend candidates for ordained ministry. The denomination has 54 annual conferences in the United States and 79 in Africa, Europe and the Philippines.

JURISDICTIONAL AND CENTRAL CONFERENCES

Five geographic jurisdictions (regions) in the United States include seven to 15 annual conferences each. Jurisdictional conferences meet simultaneously every four years to elect and assign bishops, to elect some members of general church agencies and, in some cases, to develop jurisdictional programs. Members of the jurisdictional conferences are General Conference delegates from that region plus additional delegates. Annual conferences in the region elect an equal number of laypeople and ordained clergy. United Methodists in Africa, Europe and the Philippines call the comparable geographical division a central conference. The church has seven central conferences. Each is composed of annual conferences and divided into several episcopal areas.



United Methodist bishops stand on stage as others process into the opening worship service for the 2019 United Methodist General Conference in St. Louis, Missouri.

Photo by Kathleen Barry, UM News.

GENERAL (CHURCHWIDE) AGENCIES

General agencies are primarily accountable to the General Conference rather than to the Council of Bishops. Boards of directors — lay and clergy elected jointly by General Conference and regional organizations — govern the agency staffs.

BISHOPS AND EPISCOPAL AREAS

Elected by jurisdictional and central conferences every four years, bishops are superintendents of their respective areas. The church has 46 active bishops and 46 episcopal areas in the United States and 20 in Africa, Europe and the Philippines. Episcopal areas include one or more annual conferences. Each bishop provides oversight of the ministry and mission of annual conferences in his or her area and appoints all clergy to their places of service.

The Council of Bishops gives general oversight of the ministry and mission of the church and spiritual leadership to the entire church connection. Composed of all active and retired bishops, the council meets as a group at least once a year. Through its Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships, the council builds and maintains ties with other Christian denominations as well as other faith groups.

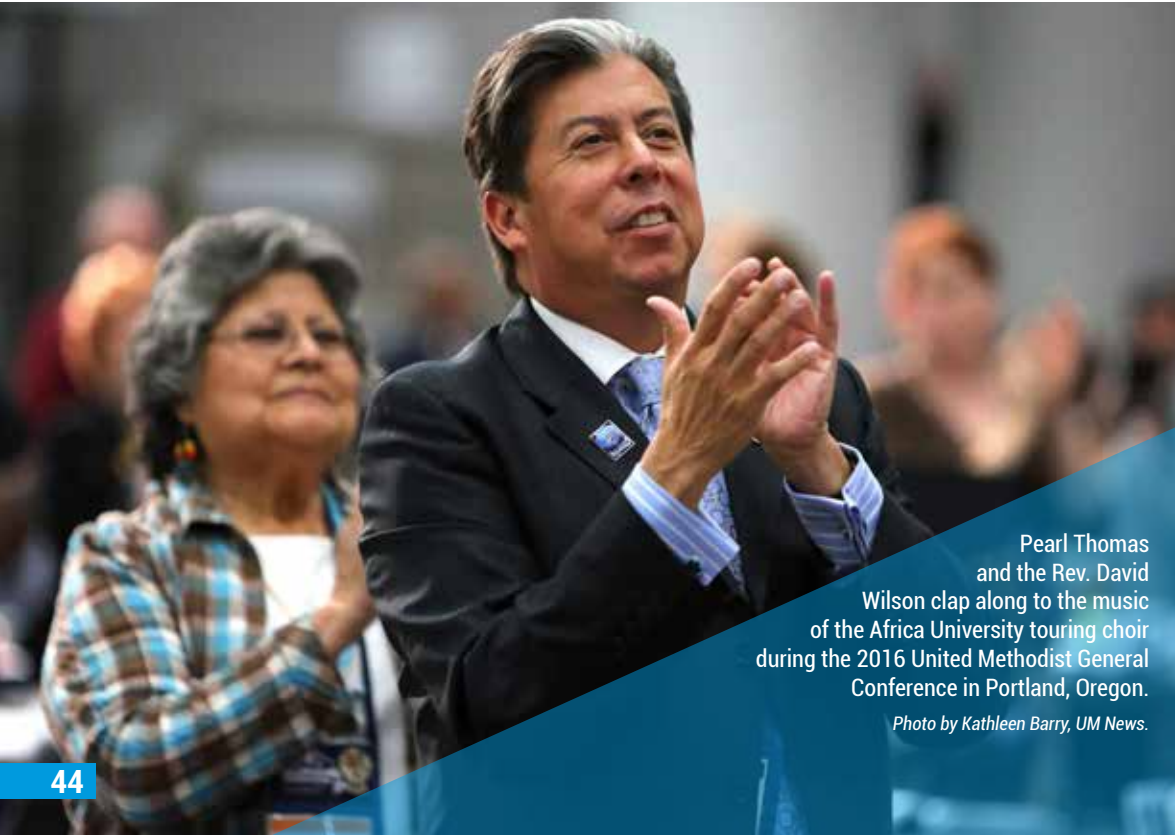
JUDICIAL COUNCIL

As the denomination’s highest judicial body or “court,” the Judicial Council interprets church law and determines constitutionality of proceedings at all levels of church life. General Conference elects its nine members, made up of laity and clergy. They normally meet twice a year to consider whether actions of the various church bodies adhere to the constitution and follow the rules outlined in the Book of Discipline.

The Council of Bishops, the annual conferences or the General Conference generally refer cases to the Judicial Council. According to the Constitution, decisions of the Judicial Council are final.

ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

The United Methodist Church is a member of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America, the World Council of Churches and the World Methodist Council; one of 11 denominations participating in Churches Uniting in Christ; and a provisional member of Christian Churches Together. It is also part of the Pan-Methodist Commission that includes representatives of The United Methodist Church and five historically African American Methodist churches: African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, African Union Methodist Protestant Church, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and Union American Methodist Episcopal Church. The commission fosters cooperation among its member denominations in evangelism, missions, publications, social concerns and higher education.



Pearl Thomas and the Rev. David Wilson clap along to the music of the Africa University touring choir during the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.
Photo by Kathleen Barry, UM News.



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CAUCUSES

Note: The five ethnic caucuses form the InterEthnic Strategy Development Group. Through the 2020 General Conference, the Rev. Lyssette Perez serves as IESDG president.

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Atlanta, Georgia

Deborah Dangerfield, chair
info@bmcrumc.org
bmcrumc.org

METODISTAS ASOCIADOS REPRESENTANDO LA CAUSA DE LOS HISPANO-AMERICANOS (MARCHA)

The Rev. Lyssette Perez
Greater New Jersey Conference, president
Bishop Elias Galvan, executive director
marchaumc.org

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF ASIAN AMERICAN
UNITED METHODISTS (NFAAUM)**

NFAAUM includes 12 sub-ethnic caucuses: Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Formosan, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, South Asian, Vietnamese, Middle Eastern and Pakistani.

The Rev. Pauline Kang, president
nfaaum.org

NATIVE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL CAUCUS (NAIC)

Cynthia Kent, chair
naicumc.com

PACIFIC ISLANDER NATIONAL CAUCUS OF UNITED METHODISTS (PINCUM)

The Rev. Michael Seui, chair,
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ASIAN-AMERICAN LANGUAGE MINISTRY PLAN

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PLAN FOR HISPANIC/LATINO MINISTRY GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES Atlanta, Georgia

The Rev. Francisco Cañas, director
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NATIVE AMERICAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
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PACIFIC ISLANDER MINISTRY PLAN
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Steve Maga, program consultant,
Pacific Islander Ministry Plan
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Atlanta, Georgia**

Paul Hak-Soon Chang, executive director
pchang@umcmmission.org
UMCMission.org/serve-with-us/partnerships/korean-ministry-plan

A stained-glass wall made out of prayers reflect the thoughts of attendees of the 2019 General Conference in St. Louis, Missouri.

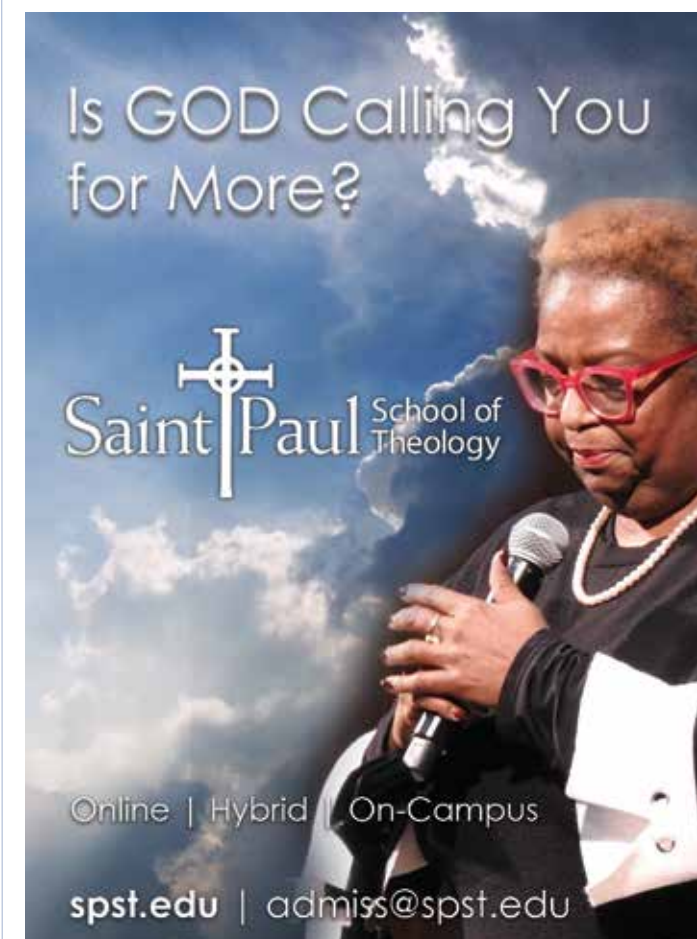
Photo by Kathleen Barry. UM News.

A resource for mission and ministry

SOCIAL PRINCIPLES 2020

 **CHURCH & SOCIETY**
The United Methodist Church

umcsocialprinciples2020.org





Reference Materials

The Daily Christian Advocate (DCA) is the most important reference tool for General Conference. Edited by United Methodist Publishing House staff member Brian Sigmon, it is comparable to the U.S. Congressional Record. An Advance DCA is available before the conference. During the conference, the DCA will be published each day and made available to delegates, other official participants and subscribers.

The Advance Edition includes all legislative proposals from individuals, local churches, caucuses and general agencies. It also contains reports from the study committees and all general agencies, as well as a listing of delegates, legislative committee assignments, seating assignments, the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order for the conference and other important information for delegates.

The Daily Christian Advocate, published each day during General Conference, contains daily transcripts of the conference proceedings, news stories and features, reports from administrative committees, nominations lists and reports of legislative committee actions.

In the past, the Advance DCA has been printed and shipped to delegates and those who order the materials, while the DCA has been printed and distributed to delegates and subscribers each day during the conference. For the 2020 General Conference, these materials will be available on

a website, www.dailychristianadvocate.org, accessible by computers, tablets and smartphones. Reports, news and nominations lists will be searchable, and users may browse them by date or by topic. The legislation section will show original petitions and the most recent legislative committee and plenary session action on each item. The website will be available in English, French, Portuguese and Kiswahili.

Delegates will receive complimentary access to the website, while others may subscribe to the site.

Printed materials will still be available for delegates. The full Advance DCA will be printed and shipped to delegates prior to General Conference. During General Conference, legislation and any other items to be voted on will also be printed and distributed to delegates, but news and the transcripts of conference proceedings will be available on the website only.

Those who are interested may subscribe to the DCA website at www.dailychristianadvocate.org.

The website for General Conference, <http://gc2020.umc.org>, provides links to general agency petitions, proposals, reports and a list of delegates, along with the legislative committees and paragraphs of the Book of Discipline with which they will be dealing. This same information will appear on the DCA website and in the printed Advance DCA.

Crossing the Language Barriers



Ruth Pierre gets a hug from her sister shortly after being consecrated a deaconess during a worship service at the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon.

Photo by Paul Jeffrey, UM News.

The United Methodist Church is a diverse denomination with congregations speaking a variety of languages. Simultaneous voice translation for delegates will be available in English, French, German, Kiswahili, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian. American Sign Language will also be used at General Conference. The Advance Daily Christian Advocate will be available in the four official General Conference languages: English, French, Kiswahili and Portuguese.



Bishops and deacons surround the communion table during opening worship for the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland, Oregon, on May 10.

Photo by Paul Jeffrey, UM News.



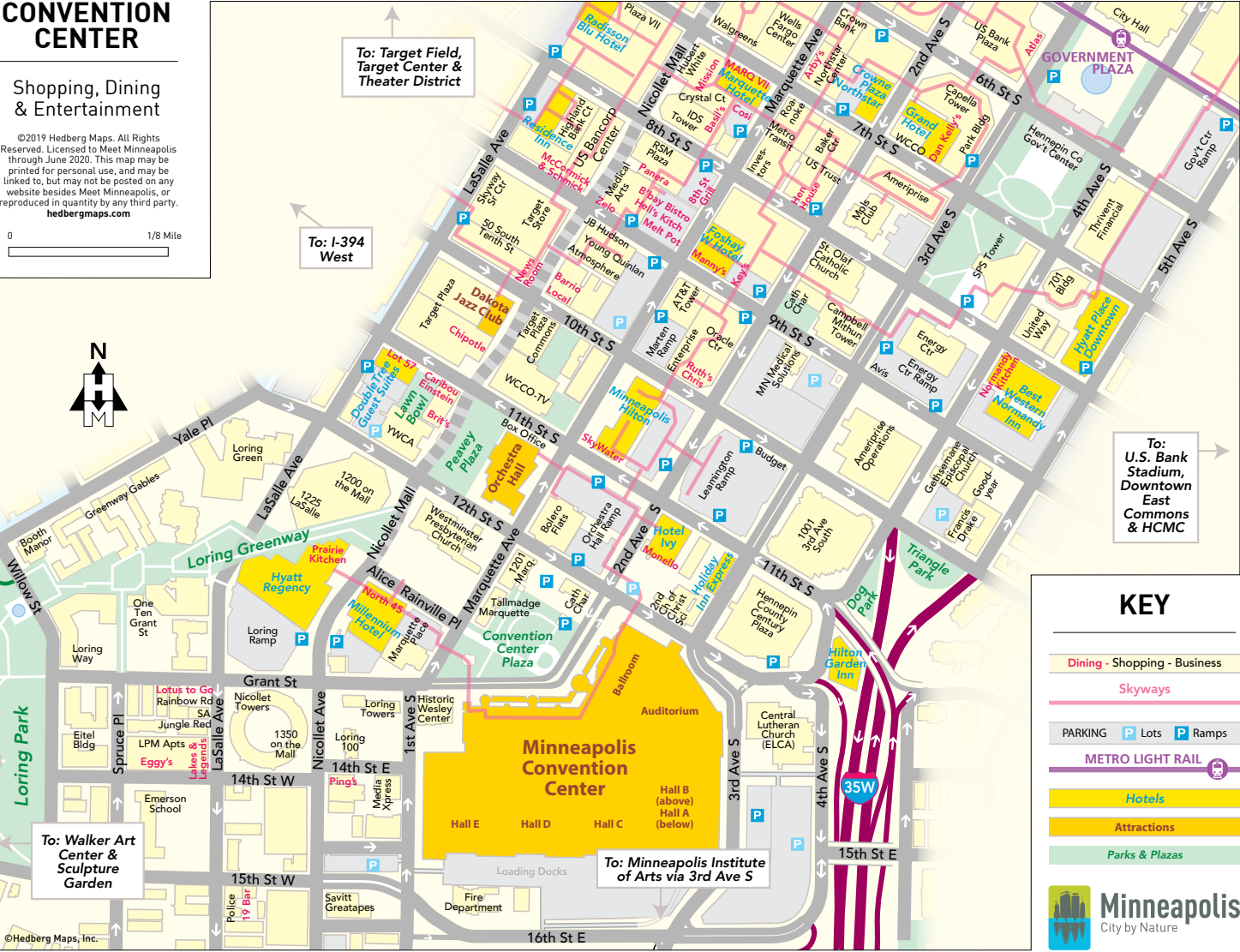
Minneapolis Map

CONVENTION CENTER

Shopping, Dining & Entertainment

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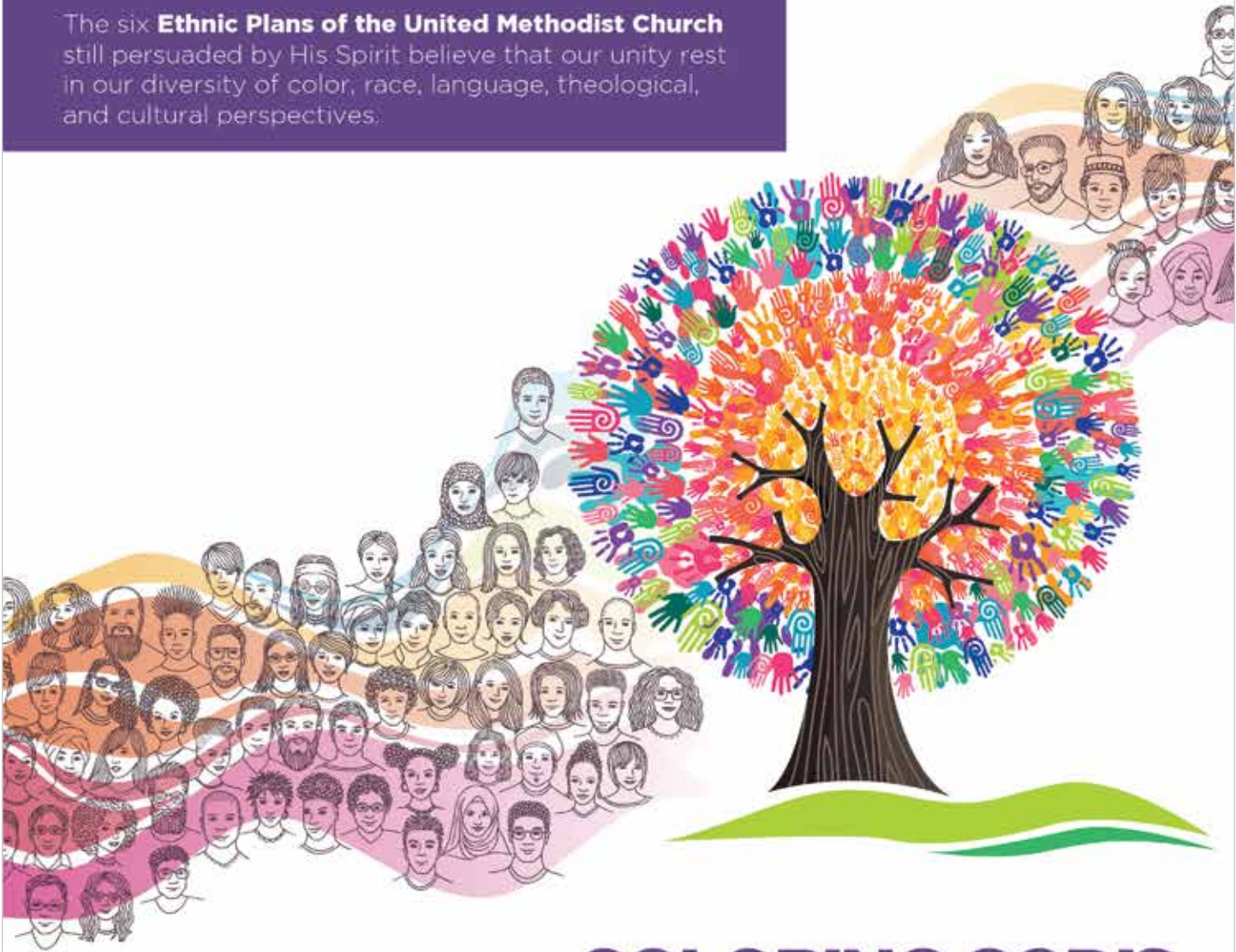


Ethnic Ministry Plans

The Unified Ethnic plans for Strengthening Racial Ministries

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The six **Ethnic Plans of the United Methodist Church** still persuaded by His Spirit believe that our unity rest in our diversity of color, race, language, theological, and cultural perspectives.



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