



COMMUNICATIONS
United Methodist Communications

¶1806.

Petition Number: 20339-IC-¶1806; Krause, Dan - Nashville, TN, USA for General Commission on Communication.

UMCom Responsibilities

Amend ¶ 1806 as follows:

¶ 1806. Responsibilities—Communication is a strategic function necessary for the success of the mission of The United Methodist Church. Specific responsibilities and functions of the General Commission on Communication and its staff are as follows:

~~21. 1.~~ The General Commission on Communication shall be charged with planning and implementation of the official United Methodist presence on and use of the Internet, the World Wide Web, or other computer services that can connect United Methodist conferences, agencies, and local churches with one another and with the larger world develop a comprehensive communications strategy and provide direction, messaging and consultation to coordinate communication across the church. The agency will develop and maintain the official presence of The United Methodist Church across communications channels, utilizing storytelling, advertising, the internet, digital and social media, and other emerging channels, tools and trends.

~~1. 2.~~ It shall, via United Methodist News, be the official newsgathering and distributing agency for The United Methodist Church and its general agencies, serving as a source of comprehensive and in-depth global news and information about the denomination for both the church and the world. In discharging its responsibilities, in keeping with the historic freedom of the press, it shall operate with editorial freedom as an independent news bureau serving all segments of church life and society, making available to both religious and public news media information concerning the Church at large demonstrating openness and transparency. It may also promote awareness of journalism as a church ministry and its importance in informing the denomination.

~~2. 3.~~ It shall have primary responsibility on behalf of the denomination to relate to the public media in presenting the Christian faith and work of the Church to the general public through the most effective communication channels. It will provide such structures and strategies as are deemed helpful to the Church in its witness through the media. It shall unify and coordinate public media messages and programs of United Methodist general agencies leadership

responsibility over the public relations strategy and activity for The United Methodist Church, working to expand visibility, broaden understanding, maintain a strong public image and enhance the ministry of The United Methodist Church around the world. It shall communicate information through a variety of channels, relate to religious and secular media, and collaborate with and support United Methodist general agencies, annual conferences and other official entities to increase positive awareness of the denomination.

~~3. It shall give special attention to television, including broadcast television, cable, videotape, videodisc, and satellite. It shall provide counsel and resources to annual conferences—and through conferences, to districts and local churches—to develop and strengthen their television ministries. Responsibilities of the commission shall include program production and placement, and relationships to commercial broadcasters at the national level in the United States.~~

4. It shall be responsible for holistic, strategic promotion of the denomination through research-based evangelistic message development and media placement.

~~4.~~ 5. It shall may create dialogue and participate in strategic communication partnerships with national, international, interdenominational, interfaith, global and ecumenical boards, agencies, caucus groups and other organizations working in communications as deemed relevant to the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church. It may also give special attention to strengthening connectedness within other Wesleyan, ethnic, and interfaith organizations.

~~5. It shall have responsibility to work toward promotion and protection of the historic freedoms of religion and the press, and it shall seek to increase the ethical, moral, and human values of media structures and programs.~~

~~6. It shall have general supervision over the public relations strategy and activity for The United Methodist Church.~~

~~7.~~ 6. It shall plan, create, produce or cause to be produced, and distribute or cause to be distributed provide services and produce resources that are informative and vital to the religious life and content that are representative of the connection and which inform and engage the spiritual life and ministry of all United Methodists and new disciples. This may include multilingual content for clergy and laity to promote understanding and appreciation of the global, connectional church. It shall work with all United Methodist agencies in coordinating resources produced for strategic Church initiatives. It shall also support and encourage participation in initiatives, ministries, and missions of the general church and its agencies, and provide resources and information to assist local congregations and their leaders in carrying out their ministries. The agency may distribute such content through a variety of channels, and may collect and maintain contact information of lay and clergy leaders and members and others to receive this content. In addition to audiences within the church, United Methodist Communications will maintain channels of communication, resources and content at the denominational level to support evangelism.

~~8.~~ 7. It shall oversee a comprehensive communication system for the church, providing a total view of communication structure and practices, including telecommunications. It shall create

networks of communicators at all levels, including local church, district, conference, jurisdiction, and general church. These networks may include periodic consultations for such purposes as idea exchange, information sharing, joint planning, and monitoring and evaluating the total Church's communication enterprises. With respect to the use of computers for communication purposes, the agency shall cooperate with the General Council on Finance and Administration around the world, utilizing best practices to serve our audiences and facilitate communication through infrastructure development, emerging technologies, global communications solutions, and strengthening communication channels and networks. It may develop information, resources, databases and services that provide channels of communication to, from and within all levels of the church.

9. 8. It shall provide resources, products, services, and guidance, resources, and training for the local church coordinator of communications (§ 255[3]), provided that training at the local level shall be through and in cooperation with annual conferences on communication to equip local church staff and leaders, as well as annual conferences across the world. Services shall include providing training and learning opportunities through a variety of media.

10. It shall educate and train in communication principles and skills, including the following: (a) national workshops and training experiences in communication skills related to various media; (b) consultation with and assistance to annual conferences, districts, and racial and ethnic groups in training local church persons, especially the local church coordinator of communications; (c) training experiences for bishops, personnel of general Church agencies, and other groups on request; (d) providing and facilitating apprenticeship, internship, and scholarship programs for church communicators; and (e) counseling schools of theology and other institutions of higher education about the training of faculty, candidates for the ordained ministry, and laypersons in the principles and skills of communication, media resource development, and media evaluation.

11. 9. It shall determine and implement, after consultation with the General Council on Finance and Administration, policy for the marketing of all financial causes demanding churchwide promotion or publicity. Its responsibility shall include serving as the church's central agency marketing the special Sundays with giving, the Advance for Christ and His Church, and the general church apportioned funds. This work will be done with collaborative input from administering agencies. Such marketing shall be consistent with the aims of Christian stewardship as determined cooperatively by the General Commission on Communication and the General Board of Discipleship and presented in programs and resource materials. Marketing budgets for the above funds shall be a charge against funds received and developed in cooperation with the General Council on Finance and Administration. In cases where the General Conference assigns a portion of the marketing responsibility to some other agency, such marketing work shall be subject to coordination by the General Commission on Communication. It may undertake the marketing of any authorized financial or other cause demanding churchwide promotion or publicity, in partnership with the responsible agency or organization. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall determine the source(s) of funding for any authorized special appeals (§ 819).

12. It shall be the central agency marketing throughout the Church the following general Church funds: World Service Fund (§ 812.1), Africa University Fund (§ 806.2), Black College Fund (§ 815), Episcopal Fund (§ 818.1), General Administration Fund (§ 813), Interdenominational Cooperation Fund (§ 814), Ministerial Education Fund (§ 816), Human Relations Day (§§ 824.1 and 263.1), UMCOR Sunday (§§ 821, 824.2 and 263.2), Native American Ministries Sunday (§§ 824.6 and 263.6), Peace with Justice Sunday (§§ 824.5 and 263.5), World Communion Sunday (§§ 824.4 and 263.3), United Methodist Student Day (§§ 824.3 and 263.4), the Advance for Christ and His Church (§§ 822 and 823), World Service Special Gifts (§ 820), Christian Education Sunday (§ 265.1), Golden Cross Sunday (§ 265.2), Rural Life Sunday (§ 265.3), Disability Awareness Sunday (§ 265.4), Youth Service Fund (§ 1208), and all other general Church funds approved by the General Conference, as well as any emergency appeals authorized by the Council of Bishops and the General Council on Finance and Administration (§ 819). In the marketing of these causes, this agency shall consult with and is encouraged to use content material provided by the program agency responsible for the area and with the agency responsible for the administration of the funds. Budgets for the above funds shall be developed in cooperation with the General Council on Finance and Administration. In cases where the General Conference assigns a portion of the marketing responsibility to some other agency, such marketing work shall be subject to coordination by the General Commission on Communication. The cost of marketing the funds, as set in the approved marketing budget, shall be a charge against receipts, except that the cost of marketing general Advance Specials shall be billed to the recipient agencies in proportion to the amount of general Advance Special funds received by each (§ 823.3), and the cost of marketing World Service Special Gifts shall be borne by administering agencies (§ 820.8). The administration of the money thus set aside for marketing shall be the responsibility of the General Commission on Communication.

13. It shall undertake the marketing of any cause or undertaking, financial or otherwise, not herein mentioned demanding Church-wide promotion or publicity, provided such action is approved by the Council of Bishops and the General Council on Finance and Administration, or their respective executive committees, if any. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall determine the source of the funding for any such authorized promotions.

14. Appeals for giving that are made to United Methodists shall be consistent with the aims of Christian stewardship. The General Commission on Communication and the General Board of Discipleship will cooperate in order that programs and resource materials of the two agencies may be in harmony in their presentation of Christian stewardship.

15. It shall provide content for clergy and laity in local congregations in a variety of accessible formats to promote understanding and appreciation of the global, connectional Church, to develop support for and encourage participation in initiatives, ministries, and missions of the general Church and its agencies, and to provide resources and information to assist local congregations and their leaders in carrying out their ministries. This agency shall obtain from the churches or district superintendents the names of church leaders entitled to receive this content so as to compile a subscription list.

~~16. 10.~~ It shall lead in communication study and research, applying findings from the professional and academic communities and internally managed research projects to the work of the church globally, and in evaluative communication research. It shall may cooperate with and support other agencies, annual conferences and local churches in ~~and other levels of the Church in communication~~ research and development work and share the findings of study and research.

~~17.~~ It shall represent United Methodist interests in new technological developments in the field of communication, including research, the evaluation of new devices and methods, and the application of technological developments to the communication services of the Church.

~~18.~~ It may develop information, resources, databases, and services that provide channels of communication to and from all levels of the Church.

~~19.~~ It shall provide resources, counsel, and staff training for area, conference, and district communication programs and develop guidelines in consultation with persons working in areas, conferences, and districts.

~~20.~~ It shall produce materials for program interpretation in cooperation with the Connectional Table and the general program boards, including the official program calendar of the denomination.

~~22. 11.~~ The General Commission on Communication shall be responsible for setting and maintaining the official brand guidelines of The United Methodist Church. Such branding guidelines shall be consistent with the standards established by the General Council on Finance and Administration to preserve the integrity of the denomination's intellectual property (see ¶¶ 807.10-.11, 2502). It may educate local churches on the importance of branding and the value of the denominational brand elements. It may assist local churches, annual conferences, and United Methodist-related institutions in developing logos consistent with branding guidelines. The commission shall may work with the General Council on Finance and Administration to ensure the use of the cross and flame logo at every level of the church (see ¶ 807.10).

~~12.~~ It may provide for the development and creation of state-of-the-art audio and/or visual productions. Productions may be created for or by United Methodist entities as well as non-United Methodist entities, provided the subjects are in accord with the Social Principles. To the greatest extent possible, productions will be accessible to those with limited hearing and/or vision.

Rationale - These updates reflect United Methodist Communications' current work given a changing communications environment. We must adapt to serve the needs of a diverse, global, multilingual church, use changing technologies and leverage new channels to enhance communication capacity. This sharpens our focus on key priorities in light of financial constraints.

See page 874 of the [DCA Advance Edition](#), Vol. 2 Sec. 2.