



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



Petition for Declaratory Decision

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

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

Name of body authorized to make a Petition (§ 2610.2): Upper NY Annual Conference
 Date of session: 06-18-2021 (month/day/year) Location: Liverpool, NY
 Name of Secretary: Jeffrey J. Hodge
 Address: 267 South Fourth Street PO Box 512 City: Fulton
 State/Province: NY ZIP/Postal Code 13069 Country: USA
 Phone: 315-383-4384 Fax: N/A E-mail: Unysecretary@yahoo.com

To be reviewed (indicate paragraph number, title of legislation and/or act where applicable):
 Book of Discipline: 635.1a Conference Board of Ordained Ministry - Nominated
 Legislation: _____
 Act of General Conference: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Secretary of the Conference/Body (month/day/year)

The following must be attached:

- Text of the written Petition for Declaratory Decision as originally presented
 - Minutes of proceedings (relevant portions only)
 - List of names and addresses of interested parties, including e-mail
 - Other relevant materials (e.g. conference rules, resolutions, policies, reports)
- Send electronic copy of this form and all materials in PDF and Microsoft Word format to: **secretary@umcjudicialcouncil.org**
- Mail eight (8) sets of hard copies to:
**UMC Judicial Council, c/o LaNella Smith, Assistant to the J.C. Secretary,
 1215 Shady Lane, Durham, NC 27712**

Brett Johnson
2039 County route 4
Stanley, NY 14561
Seneca Castle and Lyons UMC

Upper New York Conference Secretary
7481 Henry Clay Blvd.
Liverpool, New York 13088

I request a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council to clarify the following ambiguity:
Does paragraph 635.1(a) of the 2016/2019 Book of Discipline operate as a prohibition on
nominations to Board of Ordained Ministry from the floor of the Annual Conference?

Sincerely,

Rev. Brett Johnson
Signed Electronically 6/18/21

Minutes from 06-18-2021 relating to the Request for a Declaratory Decision

Conference Committee on Nominations

Rev. Tony Hipes, Chair of the Nominations Committee, presented the Conference Committee on Nominations Report. Due to Pandemic-related delays, there has not been a General Conference, impacting positions and teams elected for the quadrennium. Rev. Hipes offered a resolution seeking to suspend the rules for the election of some positions:

WHEREAS the decision to postponed General Conference until 2022 extends the current quadrennium for yet another year,

WHEREAS the UNY Conference Rules dictate some teams be elected quadrennially, specifically, College Ministry, Team, Hispanic Ministries Committee, and the Social Holiness Team,

WHEREAS, the UNY Conference Nominations Team does not want to constrain leadership transitions on these teams for another year by holding them to the current members,

Therefore, the UNY Conference Nominations Team asks for a suspension of the Conference Rules to allow the election of these three teams for a four-year period.

The vote to suspend the rules **was approved** by a vote of 549, yes and 34, no.

The nominations were posted and announced. The Conference Secretary ad interim will be Rev. Carolyn Stow. The Board of Trustees will serve ad interim until the 2022 General Conference. Since there is no paper ballot, the class of 2025 will continue.

For the Conference Committee on Religion and Race, there are three names that were inadvertently left on the written report that need to be removed: Carrie Wolfe, Pam Burns and Rachael Jordan. It was also noted that Blends Smith, Member Emeritus should be added to the list.

For the Committee on Native American Ministries (CONAM), the following names were left off the written report: Bethany Printup Dias, Carolyn Houston, Kay Wilbert, Elizageht Brook Conlin, Susan Prossen, Thmas White Wolf Fassett, Rosalynn Kinsburgy, Mary Alice Nehan, Rosalee Shantunish .

The full report is before the body for a vote.

JJ Warren, laity, spoke against the report, specifically changes to the Board of Ordained Ministry, claiming that Richelle Goff, clergy, was removed from the board because of her stance and recent actions that her church has taken to allow the performance of same-sex marriages.

Bishop Webb removed himself from his chair and made personal statement in response to Mr. Warren's comments, which included the following: "One of the requirements has consistently been the ability to support United Methodist polity and the Book of Discipline and The United Methodist Church. The requirement is consistent and validated by several Judicial Council decisions, including Decision 1366, which reminds that 'under long-standing principle of legality, The Discipline contains the law of The United Methodist Church governing the conduct of lay and clergy members and regulating all aspects of church life. No individual member or entity should violate, ignore or negate Church law.

The principle of legality demands that all decisions and actions by official bodies and their representatives be based on and limited by the Constitution and The Discipline. The Board of Ordained Ministry is mandated to apply and enforce all relevant provisions.' My nominations for the one-year interim Board of Ordained Ministry before you for your action."

Bishop Webb declared an attempt to nominate someone to the Board of Ordained Ministry from the floor out of order. He reiterated his position that the Board of Ordained Ministry is nominated by the Bishop.

Joel Holcomb, clergy, made a motion to divide the question by pulling out the Board of Ordained Ministry nominations from the rest of the nominations report. It received a second.

The vote to divide the question was **not approved**, with 267 voting yes, 348, no. It needed 308 to pass.

Ian Urriola laity, Genesee Valley District, moved to appeal the previous ruling of the chair that the Board of Ordained Ministry nominations cannot be amended by the annual conference. Mr. Urriola explained that in his reading of The Book of Discipline, he agrees that the Bishop brings Board of Ordained Ministry nominations to the Annual Conference, but there is no clarity in The Book of Discipline that nominations cannot come to the Board of Ordained Ministry from the floor. The vote to be taken is to uphold the Chair's (Bishop's) ruling

The vote to support the Chair's ruling **was upheld**, with 435 voting yes and 165 voting no. 311 votes were required to pass

The Report of the Nominations Committee continued with the District Nominations. After reviewing the nominations, Rev. Hipes moved the approval of District Nominations. The District Nominations were **approved**, with 610 voting yes and 18 voting no. 315 votes were required for passage.

Rev. Hipes then moved the passage of the entire Nominations Report. It **was approved**, with 563 voting yes and 86 voting no. 325 votes were required for passage.

Brett Johnson clergy, male, requested a Declaratory Decision from the Judicial Council to clarify the following ambiguity: Does paragraph 635.1(a) of the 2016/2019 Book of Discipline operate as a prohibition on nominations to the Board of Ordained Ministry from the floor of the Annual Conference?

The Request for a Declaratory Decision from the Judicial Council requires 1/5 support from the body. It **was supported** with 286 voting yes and 366 voting no. 131 votes were needed for passage.

INTERESTED PARTIES

Rev. Jeffrey Hodge
Conference Secretary (until October 1, 2021)
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Rev. Carolyn Stow
Conference Secretary ad interim, beginning October 1
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Rev. Brett Johnson
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Bishop Mark J. Webb
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