



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



### Petition for Declaratory Decision

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

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

Name of body authorized to make a Petition (§ 2610.2): ALASKA UNITED METHODIST CONFERENCE  
 Date of session: 06/22/2021 (month/day/year) Location: VIRTUAL  
 Name of Secretary: THE REV MS KAREN MARTIN TICHENOR  
 Address: 712 N. STRAWBERRY RD City: KENAI  
 State/Province: AK ZIP/Postal Code 99611-8534 Country: USA  
 Phone: 907-394-4849 Fax: NA E-mail: hope4glory.kmt@gmail.com

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

Book of Discipline: ¶507  
 Legislation: NA  
 Act of General Conference: NA

Signature:  Date: 08/10/2021  
 Secretary of the Conference/Body (month/day/year)

**The following must be attached:**

- o Text of the written Petition for Declaratory Decision as originally presented
  - o Minutes of proceedings
  - o List of names and addresses of interested parties, including eu mail
  - o Other relevant materials (e.g. conference rules, resolutions, policies, reports)
- Send electronic copy of this form and all materials in PDF and Microsoft Word format to: **secretary@umcjudicialcouncil.org**
- Mail thirteen (13) sets of hard copies to:  
**UMC Judicial Council, c/o LaNella Smith, Assistant to the J.C. Secretary,  
 1215 Shady Lane, Durham, NC 27712**

ALASKA UNITED METHODIST CONFERENCE

of

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

REQUEST FOR DECLARATORY DECISION RELATED TO THE ALASKA OMNIBUS  
PROPOSAL

22 June 2021

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

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

WHEREAS the legislative work of the General Conference is carried forward primarily through the exercise of the petition process as provided in ¶507, and

WHEREAS the Delegation of the AUMC participated in the submission of a petition on 08Jan21, which petition, is entitled “Christmas Covenant Combined with Wespeth Provisions and Protocol” and less formally known as the Alaska Omnibus Proposal, which petition can be found at the following location on the World Wide Web:

<https://alaskaumc.files.wordpress.com/2021/01/the-alaska-omnibus-proposal-introduction-legislation.pdf>, and

WHEREAS the petition was submitted by means of the email of which a copy is hereto attached, and

WHEREAS The Alaska United Methodist Conference on 22Jun21 adopted a petition, of which a copy is hereto attached, from lay member Lonnie D. Brooks that proposed supporting and endorsing the Alaska Omnibus Proposal and urging its adoption by the General Conference, and

WHEREAS the Commission on the General Conference (COGC) has announced in its press release of 18Dec20, (<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/commission-on-the-general-conference-establishes-timeline-for-next-steps>) quoted in relevant part herein following, that any petitions submitted after the “original 230 and 45 day deadlines” will be handled as late petitions:

The Commission affirmed the process for receiving petitions submitted after the original 230 and 45 day deadlines noting that they will be treated and processed through the existing system of receiving petitions submitted after the deadline. The Committee on Reference is the appropriate body to determine whether

petitions submitted after the original 230 and 45 day deadlines should be considered, following the normal procedures and processes already contained within the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order. The process for amending previously submitted petitions was also reviewed.

and

WHEREAS the date now established by the COGC for the opening session of GC20/21/22 is 29Aug22 (<https://www.umnews.org/en/news/general-conference-postponed-until-2022>) which according to ¶507.6 requires new petition due dates of 11Jan22 and 15Jul22, and

WHEREAS the original due dates COGC has announced, 18Sep19 and 21Mar20, are dates which have no relationship whatsoever to the currently scheduled opening session of General Conference 2020, and

WHEREAS ¶2610.2.(c) provides to the Judicial Council jurisdiction over a Request for Declaratory Decision from “any body created or authorized by the General Conference on matters relating to or affecting the work of such body”, and

WHEREAS ¶2610.2.(j) provides to the Judicial Council jurisdiction over a Request for Declaratory Decision from “any annual conference on matters relating to annual conferences or the work therein,”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska United Methodist Conference, under its authority granted in ¶¶2610.2.(c) and 2610.2(j), submits to the Judicial Council this Request for Declaratory Decision on the meaning, application, and effect of ¶¶507.5, 507.6, and 507.7 as they relate to and inform the decision of the Commission on the General Conference to treat all petitions received from bodies other than annual conferences as late and subject to review and disposition by the Committee on Reference when such petitions are submitted any time after 18Sep19, with particular attention to those petitions submitted between and including 19Sep19 and 11Jan22. In particular the Judicial Council is asked to provide answers to the following questions:

- 1) Does the phrase found in ¶¶507.5 and 507.6 “no later than 230 days prior to the opening session of the General Conference” and the nearly identical phrase found in ¶507.7 “no later than 230 days before the opening of General Conference” provide to the Commission on the General Conference authority to interpret the language to mean “after the *original* 230 and 45 day deadlines” as stated in its press release of 18Dec20? [Emphasis added]
- 2) Is the petition that is the subject of this RDD which was submitted by an authorized body, the Alaska Delegation, in a timely manner as defined in the plain language of ¶507 properly subject to being treated as a late petition by the Commission on the General Conference?

Respectively submitted,

The Alaska United Methodist Conference

Karen Martin Tichenor, Secretary  
712 Strawberry Rd.  
Kenai AK 99611-8534

**2021 ALASKA UM CONFERENCE**  
**Minutes of the Virtual 50<sup>th</sup> Session of Annual Conference**  
**June 22, 2021**  
**9am-11am & 1pm-3pm**

**Laity Session & Clergy Session –**

Both sessions were held virtually in June prior to Annual Conference. The clergy session was held June 3, 2021 and the laity session was held June 9, 2021.

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**The Morning Session** started at 9 am. with a **Land Acknowledgement** led by the Rev. Lisa Talbott, Leadership Team Chair. She invited everyone to name where they were from and the land upon which they live, work and play on the chat platform. Lisa noted that every single United Methodist church in the Alaska Conference rests on unceded land and called the conference to seek a growing awareness and appreciation of the peoples and cultures who nurtured and cared for the land where we live, work, play and worship. She also voiced a call to action to confess our sins, and enter into new authentic, non-colonial life affirming relationships with our Native Alaskan siblings. We were then called to center ourselves in heart and soul for the memorial service.

**Memorial Service** – A powerful and tender memorial service was offered, coordinated by the 2021 Alaska Conference worship team: Emily Carroll, Murray Crookes and Fran Lynch. Rev. Faith McClellan opened the service honoring our saints who have died in the last year. “Great is Thy Faithfulness” was the theme and opening hymn.

Candles were lit, names read and pictures shown as the conference remembered the saints from each congregation who died this past year. Candles were also lit in recognition of the deaths of over 600,000 persons from Covid-19 in the United States and many more globally. In a powerful moment of lament, a whole tray of candles was lit in recognition of those who have died because of the sin of Racism and our complicity in it as well as the many Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) whose lives have been taken. Emily (carrying baby Elias), Murray and Fran took turns lighting candles and reading names. The service closed with “For All the Saints”. “The righteous live forever; their reward is with the Lord.”

**Call to Order** – Bishop Elaine Stanovsky thanked the worship team and called the 50th session of the Alaska Conference to order at 9:24 am.

**Introductions:** Introductions were made by the Greater Northwest (GNW) Episcopal Area Bishop Elaine Stanovsky and Alaska Superintendent, Carlo Rapanut.

At the Head Table were Bishop Elaine Stanovsky – Presiding Bishop, Karen Martin Tichenor – Annual Conference Secretary, Lonnie Brooks – Parliamentarian, Jo Anne Hayden – Alaska Conference Lay Leader and Carlo Rapanut – Alaska Conference Superintendent and Director of Connectional Ministries.

Carlo Rapanut then introduced those behind the scenes:

Chat & Question/Answer Monitors and Staff: Lisa Talbott – Leadership Team (LT) Chair, Brant Henshaw – Annual Conference Treasurer, Jim Doepkin - Communications, Crystal Feaster - Alaska Admin. Assistant, Rhondalei Gabuat - Bishop’s Executive Assistant.

Presenters: Jim Alter, Tom Wilson, Bruce Galvin, Erin Day, Karen Rodriguez and David Reinholz.

**Participation Instructions** were then given by Carlo Rapanut and Paul Roadarmel, staff member of GNTV. Paul gave the conference the technical instructions as to how to load ballots and vote on the GNTV voting website, how to ask questions, and how to be recognized. A practice vote was taken. Test question: Do you like pickles? Yes 34 / No 4 / Total 38 votes, Success!

**Motions of organization** were made by Karen Martin Tichenor, AC Secretary  
For the **Roll Call & Setting of the Bar** --69 were registered for Annual Conference with 35 voting laity, 4 non-voting laity, 28 voting clergy and 7 non-voting staff/presenters leaving a total of 63 with vote.

Karen moved that those who had received a voter ID # were those who had vote on any action within this 50<sup>th</sup> session of the Alaska Annual Conference.

To **Nominate an Assistant Secretary** – Karen moved we accept Christina DowlingSoka to be our Assistant Secretary for this 2021 session of our Annual Conference meeting.

To **Adopt the Agenda** – Addendum, Pre-Conference Handbook (PCH) p3

Per the 2016 Book of Discipline, P605.2, Karen moved the adoption of the agenda for this 2021 session of the Alaska UM Annual Conference that is before you.

Jo Anne Hayden seconded setting the bar

Lonnie Brooks seconded nomination of Christina DowlingSoka as Assistant Secretary

Janice Michael seconded adoption of the agenda

Bishop Elaine called for the vote on all the motions of organization with one vote.

Yes 43 / No 0 / Total 43, Motion passed

An AmplifyMedia video was shown during the taking of the vote.

Bishop then called upon Lonnie Brooks to make the **Presentation of the Rules Report** – Pre-Conference Handbook (PCH) p54-57

Lonnie moved adoption of the report in total. Lonnie spoke to the motion- “This comes from the Leadership Team. We propose adding these two rules to assist churches who can’t financially rise to the need of clergy, i.e. maternity/paternity leave and short term disability leave.”

Discussion: No questions were asked.

Bishop Elaine called for the vote for adoption. Yes 45 / No 1 / Total 46, Motion passed

A Global Ministries video was shown during the vote.

Superintendent Carlo Rapanut then presented a **Church Discontinuance Motion** – Addendum Pre-Conference Handbook (PCH) p 11

The motion: In keeping with Paragraph 2549 of the 2016 Book of Discipline, by vote of the congregation during their special annual meeting (charge conference equivalent) on May 2, 2021, with consent of the Bishop and Cabinet, I move that the Alaska United Methodist Conference discontinues the New Hope Methodist-Presbyterian Church in North Pole, Alaska, as a United Methodist congregation to honor their desire to continue only as a Presbyterian Church-USA congregation.

We celebrate 44 years of partnership in ministry between United Methodists and Presbyterians in the North Pole community through the New Hope Church. With this action, we consent to the

dissolution of the union and bless our siblings in this next chapter as a fully Presbyterian congregation, looking forward to continued partnership in ministry expressed in new ways. Priscilla Wilbur, lay, Soldotna, seconded

Discussion:

Susan Williams asked -What is the financial impact due to this action?

Carlo: It effects the readjusting of apportionments for 2022. CFA will work on this.

Lonnie Brooks, speaking for. He celebrated our ecumenical partnerships and noted that radically different from discontinuance votes the conference has taken in the past this vote will liberate the congregation for ongoing mission as the congregation becomes a fully Presbyterian PC-USA congregation.

None spoke against.

Bishop Elaine offered a prayer before calling for the vote. Yes 48 / No 1 / Total 49, Motion passed

An Africa University in Zimbabwe video was shown during the vote.

Ron Illingworth, lay member, New Hope Methodist Presbyterian Church, expressed his heartfelt thanks on behalf of the congregation for all that has gone before. He named and was thankful for the pastors provided by the Alaska Conference – Keith Wise, Karen Martin-Tichenor, Tim Christiansen, Trent and Linda Babbitts, as well as several work teams that had been sent to help in need. He offered thanks for the acknowledgment and approval of the proposal which enables the church to move forward. The congregation looks forward to continuing to work with the United Methodist Church as they move into the future. They have appreciated being a part of the conference. Bishop Stanovsky thanked Ron and the congregation.

A question was raised by Steve Fisher regarding who currently holds the deed to the property, and it was explained by Ron that the local church maintained the deed. It was noted in chat that union churches normally own their own property as provided in their bylaws which are not subject to the UM Trust Clause and therefore this would not be a complication.

The Bishop then gave a blessing to New Hope and a promise, “we are working in Jesus with you”.

Following the above action, Carlo Rapanut turned our attention to the **One Matters Award**. This award was established 5 years ago to celebrate the congregation who in a calendar year is able to turn their numbers from 0 to 1 or more through Profession of Faith. This year it is Kenai UMC, the Rev. April Hall, clergy and Mike Dimmick, lay to accept. They have had 0s since 2015. In 2020, during a pandemic, they were able to receive 2 adults by profession of faith. Mike received the award along with \$1000 gift for the church.

**Presentation of the 2022 Budget** – Jim Alter/Brant Henshaw, Pre-Conference Handbook p39-43 / p11-13

Jim began the presentation with gratitude to Brant for his great work, information and availability during the year. The Conference is truly blessed to have Brant as our treasurer. The proposed budget reflects the same priorities of how we spend our monies as in the last couple of years. The major categories are conference staff and benefits (30%), church starts (Nanaka Valley – UMC of Every Nation) and revitalizing existing churches (23%), General Conference Apportionments (16%) and helping out local congregations that aren't able to cover pastor's salaries/benefits (1%). For office (8%) was spent. All this creates 88% of the budget.

Revenues show 71% are from apportionments and 29% are from reserves, some of which are sustainable (reserves in which we only spend money earned on principal) and some non-sustainable. In the last 5 years we've grown in using these funds and that pattern is not sustainable long term. Questions may be addressed to [jimjeanalter@hotmail.com](mailto:jimjeanalter@hotmail.com), 808-269-4330. Hopefully in 2022, there will be a turn-around of churches who are not paying their apportionments. 85% have been paying. This isn't enough. We all need to pay our full apportionments to help the whole.

**2022 Equitable Compensation Report** – Jim Alter, Pre-Conference Handbook (PCH) p7-9

Jim Alter then presented the Equitable Compensation Report to be found on pages 7-9 in the PCH. He acknowledged the task force that brought the proposal to the Leadership Team which included: Bennie Grace Nabua from Sitka, Bertha Koweluk from Nome and David Noffsinger from Homer.

The minimum salary base compensation recommendation for 2022 was set at \$45,500 which represents an increase of .4 of 1%, the amount derived from the prior year in the Anchorage Consumer Price Index.

Lisa Talbott, LT, moved that the Conference accept the report of the Equitable Compensation Task Force.

Discussion:

Lonnie Brooks- "The trend of the denomination in paying apportionments is down. Will AK be different?" Jim Alter said he hopes our Conference would do better.

Brant Henshaw- "Lonnie raises a good point. I don't think we will get to 100% necessarily. 2021 will be an interesting statistical year as regards stats due to the GC delay. Percentages will need interpretation as we go through the year. Through May we are tracking similarly to 2020."

Jim Alter noted the apportionment payout during the pandemic was as good as the year before.

Bishop Elaine called for the vote on the motion. Yes 43 / No 0 / Total 43, Motion passed  
An Evangelism video was shown during the vote.

Next Bruce Galvin, Conference Benefits Officer, presented **Petition #3: Past Service Pension Rate** – Pre-Conference Handbook p 69-70

This rate is set each year. The petition comes from the Leadership Team (LT), proposing \$841 to be the rate for those who served prior to 1982.

Lisa Talbott, LT, moved the Conference accept the current pension rate.

Discussion: none

Bishop Elaine called for the vote. Yes 44 / No 0 / Total 44, Motion passed

A Future with Hope United Methodist Men video was shown during the vote.

Following the vote, Tom Wilson was invited to give the **NWUMF (Northwest UM Foundation) Report**.

"Greetings from the Foundation. Thank you for this opportunity. We are doing well. Hope you are too. We continue to resource and be in conversation with churches about assets."

The Foundation has served the Alaska Conference since 2009. Assets have grown. The current total is just less than 90 million and gains in 2020 were at 18.37% on the Diversified Modified Portfolio. Year to date gains in 2021 are at 5.91%.

Tom detailed the 4 ongoing Alaska endowments: Tom Dahl New Church Start Fund- \$312, 201, for Native Alaskan ministries - \$430,643, the Conference Legacy Fund - \$2,991,796 and a new

endowment, the Rev. Lucille M Barton Memorial Scholarship Fund for the seminary education of Alaska Native students or others if there are no Alaska Native students in a particular year. Currently this new endowment has received \$147,000 from the Trust and expect to receive more to bring this up to \$250,000. The Bishop thanked Tom for the report, stories of God's abundance and also remembered the wonderful life and legacy of the Rev. Lucy Barton.

Our **PMU Report** was given by Bob Smith and Andy Bartel.

Bob started with a personal story. He had left ankle replacement surgery a few weeks ago. A child saw that and cried, owie! When the wound was camouflaged she calmed down. Professional ministry is often working with people with wounds. The church should be carrying the shame not the individual who is gay or BIPOC or...persons who have been wounded. We need to be boldly shameless as the people of God. We are thankful to our Bishop for her leadership. And thankful she has invited Carlo to be a close ally. Their skills are gifts to us. They are sacrificial in the love they give us as are we in our love for them. Everything has been challenged by Covid-19. It has caused us to look hard at where we are. We have been amazing in rising to its challenges. PMU is to guide, mentor, and prepare clergy to serve. (Andy was unable to be present due to internet issues so Bob reported on the following ordinations and commissionings, both those which have or will take place in 2021, and those which potentially will take place in 2022.

**In 2021 –**

Murray Crookes - will be commissioned as provisional elder by PNW this week.

Emily Carroll - will be ordained elder by PNW. (Emily was voted into full membership last year)

Autumn Krueger – was ordained elder by Dakotas.

**In 2022 –**

April Hall – will hopefully be ordained as an elder by PNW in summer of 2022

Laura Reijns - hopefully commissioned as provisional deacon by PNW in summer of 2022

Meghan Woods - hopefully commissioned as provisional elder by PNW in summer of 2022

**Local Pastor Updates:**

Janice Carlton - retired as LLP and is beginning as endorsed as Chaplain for US Coast Guard

Tafa Fulumua – has newly requested to be considered for transitioning from LLP track to elder track upon completion of Advanced Course of Study

Continuing as LLPs - Bertha Koweluk, Darla Bradley, Matt Reinders

Personal privilege-first video shown.

**Presentation of Nominations Report** – Carlo Rapanut, Addendum Pre-Conference Handbook p4-10

Yesterday is the latest posting of this report. Look at those where a few new names are added.

Linda Haynes has served as statistician for 13 years. She has worked hard. She is transitioning out of this role. Thank you Linda for all your hard work!

Blessing given by Carlo Rapanut at 10:57am praying in Filipino.

**Lunch Break**

**Afternoon Session** – start time: 1pm

**General Conference/Jurisdictional Conference Delegation Report** – Panel: Fran Lynch, Jim Doepken, Lisa Talbott, Kelly Marciales, Bennie Grace Nabua, Dan Wilcox

It was noted that the delegation wanted to update the conference on their work and also to create opportunities for the conference to share their perspectives and background in the General NW Delegation support.

Deaconess Fran Lynch noted the participants in the delegation: Jo Anne Hayden, Lonnie Brooks, Deaconess Kelly Marciales, Rev. Jim Doepken, Rev. “Jo Jo” Nabua, Rev. Dan Wilcox, Re. Lisa Talbot and herself.

The team has been working hard throughout this time of delay. They have done their work in light of such events as: the Western Jurisdiction Fresh Summit Gathering held in Nov. 2019; the work of the “Team of Ten” who worked for a year following the Fresh Expression’s Summit and shared a summary report; the current work of the 5 Western Jurisdiction Groups who will provide updates prior to our summer’s virtual Jurisdictional Conference scheduled for July 17<sup>th</sup>; the ongoing work of the Bishop in the “Where Love Lives” dialogues; conversations with gathered stakeholders, conversations without limits of institutional roles; and April 30 – May 1 conversations initiated by the Western Jurisdiction’s Stakeholder’s gathering of an unaffiliated group of leaders who want to engage clergy and laity in conversation with limitations of institutional roles – a grass roots approach.

Deaconess Kelly Marciales presented several polling questions via Menti to take the pulse of the conference on certain values. All questions were multiple choice.

*Polling Question 1:* “What are the most important faith values you would like to see lived out in our conference, jurisdiction, denomination? (Based on the Western Jurisdiction Stakeholder Gathering Menti Poll). The Results were as follows:

Inclusion- 80%, Discipleship- 49%, Diversity -47%, Justice- 73%, Equity- 47%, Connectional- 38%, Compassion- 58%, Missional- 31%

*Polling Question 2:* “What would be most important to you in your local ministries? The results were as follows:

Local congregations working together in shared ministry fields- 64%, Discipleship support- 28%, Fundraising Training- 2%, More relational support for clergy- 11%, Engaging in new kinds of ministries never done before- 51%, Other - 13%.

*Polling Question 3:* “What ways can the structure be updated to better support the work of the church? The results were as follows:

Fewer Bishops – 2%, Less Hierarchy, more local accountability – 32%, More resources that local churches can find and use-64%, Partnering with other congregations in “clusters” in ministry efforts – 68%, More financial resources available to congregations from the Conference for new ministry ideas – 23%

*Polling Question 4:* “How important is it that we better support each other in ministry?” (Scale of 1-5. 5 being very important. 1 being not important). The results were as follows:

1-6%, 2-2%, 3-9%, 4-15%, 5-68%

The results of the polls will be taken back to the work groups. The group continued their report acknowledging that where the work will lead is unknown, but they continue to look forward, knowing that love never ends. They invited those who wish to be a part of the conversation to let any one of the delegation know so that we can join them when future opportunities for conversation emerge.

Dan noted that a key piece of work in the delegation has been the Alaska Omnibus Proposal which Bishop Stanovsky honored all those elected, being thankful for the work, acknowledging that the weight/wait is heavy. The conference will hold this group in prayer.

**Petition #1: Support for Alaska Omnibus Proposal** – Lonnie Brooks Pre-Conference Handbook p58

This proposal is a product of the Alaska United Methodist Conference General Conference (AUMC GC) delegation discussions joined by 3 others; Amy Valdez Barker, Deacon, N. Georgia Delegation, Meg Lassiat, Deacon, Indiana Delegation and Andy Hendren of General Counsel, Wespath. (Andy's role was to give guidance on pension issues.)

Lonnie Brooks moved that the AUMC adopt the petition to support the Alaska Omnibus Proposal for adoption by General Conference.

Jo Anne Hayden seconded it.

Lonnie spoke regarding this petition- "Conversations are happening across the denomination while the church is waiting for General Conference to happen. Separation is upon us already. This Petition seeks to address the tensions between the two proposals: the "Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation" and the "Christmas Covenant" (coming out of the Central Conferences). The first of these deals largely with separation, the second with the regionalization of the church anticipated to come out of the Post-Separation Church. The Omnibus Proposal believes the question of which would be dealt with first to be unnecessary and seeks to bring the two proposals together, also giving attention to input from Wespath in order to ensure the safety of clergy pensions. The Alaska Omnibus Proposal would call for one vote on both the Covenant and the Protocol in addition to the Wespath proposals. This motion is asking the Alaska UM Conference to endorse this work of the delegation and to support the Proposal's adoption by the General Conference.

Discussion:

Jim Doepken spoke in favor of acceptance: "On its own the Christmas Covenant needs 2/3 vote to pass and that won't happen right now with the GC divisiveness and political climate. At the same time the group celebrates that the Covenant comes from outside of the U.S. and celebrates regionalism in a decolonized fashion. It allows all churches to envision life into the future that God has in store for them. We are trying not to have the sides fight with each other."

(no one spoke against)

Kelly Marciales spoke in favor of acceptance: She spoke in favor as a member of the Team of Ten and as a part of the delegation. She was part of putting this together and says that this benefits both groups moving forward without prioritizing one over the other. It allows a restructuring in a positive way.

(no more comments)

**Vote** – Bishop Elaine called for the vote Yes 36 / No 3 / Total 39, Motion passed  
An Africa University video (30+ countries involved) was shown during the vote tabulation.

**Request for Declaratory Decision** – Lonnie Brooks, Pre-Conference Handbook p63-65

An obstacle before us is that the due date for a petition for General Conference is still as what was needed for GC 2020 that didn't happen due to the pandemic. We are in the after period for that timing as General Conference was delayed.

Lonnie Brooks moved that we adopt this request for declaratory decision.

Jo Anne Hayden, lay, seconded.

Lonnie to speak- “We have to make a formal request to Judicial Council to make a declaratory decision or ask our bishop to do so which still has to be approved by the Judicial Council. We are requesting Judicial Council make this ruling. If they rule for a timing connected to the start date of Aug. 29, 2022 for the General Conference meeting, Jan. 11, 2022 would be the closing date. So our petition should be accepted.”

No questions or discussion followed.

**Vote** – Bishop Elaine requested the vote. Yes 46 / No 0 / Total 46, Motion passed  
Evangelism video was shown during the vote.

**Petition #2: An Invitation to Live Into a Mission District Status** – Lisa Talbott/Carlo Rapanut, Pre-Conference Handbook p66-68

Lisa- “In May 2021, 215 graves of indigenous children were detected in Canada. We know that we too are guilty of such violence by our complicity and the harm done to indigenous people. We seek a model of leadership that decolonizes our system and conference. Thank you to the Leadership Team: We need to continue to learn and to invite the PNW into relationship with us in a decolonized way. This petition invites the Pacific Northwest (PNW) AC to live into these values with us. The Oregon Idaho (OI) Conference passed this petition as a sister conference. Last night PNW clergy passed it with 98% voting yes. We will live into this transition and let the world catch up.”

Carlo – “We last gathered in February 2020 and voted to petition to become a part of the boundaries of the Pacific Northwest Conference. We believe the delay of the pandemic has given us time to do this transition well. It has let us name how and why we want to do this. It is starting with relationships and building through trust where we need to go. We urge you to pass this petition.”

Discussion: none

**Vote** – Bishop Elaine called for the vote. Yes 44 / No 1 / Total 45, Motion passed  
Church & Society video shown.

**Petition #4: Point Hope Media Collaboration** – Faith McClellan Pre-Conference Handbook p71-74

In 1958 the US proposed detonating nuclear arsenal in the arctic. A group rose up to stop this. It worked. This collaboration is to empower youth to learn, express and work toward nuclear disarmament. Traditionally it has been the faith communities to have the loudest voices in these conversations. A summit was called but was cancelled twice by the pandemic. During July 7-24, 2021 there will be 3 days a week gathering to work on a film for/with the youth to further this discussion and action. Consider promoting theological study regarding nuclear weapons/war. We ask you to support the Pt Hope Media Collaboration and to promote churches to declare themselves nuclear free zones.

Faith moved Pt Hope Media Collaboration to be supported by the AUMC.

Murray Crookes seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

**Vote** – Bishop Elaine called for the vote. Yes 47 / No 0 / Total 47, Motion passed  
Global Ministries/UMCOR video shown.

**Vote to receive Petition #5 –**

As a late breaking petition this needs a 2/3 vote of the conference for the rules to be suspended in order to receive or consider this Petition according to R.6.0502 (p.127, 2020 AUMC Journal).

Lonnie Brooks moved to suspend the rules to allow the hearing of the late breaking Petition #5.

Terry Sherwood seconded.

Bishop Elaine called for vote Yes 37 / No 3 / Total 40 (need 2/3), Motion passed.

NWUMF video shown.

**Petition #5: Creation of Cross-Conference Vitality Commission - Addendum Pre-Conference Handbook p12-15**

Erin Day, chair of AK Vitality Team, Keren Rodriguez (OI) & David Reinholz, PNW Board of Congregational Development, gave the background of the Petition, and the need to form a cross conference vitality commission for coordination, oversight, accountability.

Nico Reijns moved adoption of Petition #5

Mike Dimmick, seconded

Erin and David spoke to this. Keren was unable to attend. David shared- Alaska does what he (David) wishes other conferences would do; do, support, collaborate, and serve together.

Rather than developing legislation to form one joint Vitality team, a recommendation coming out of the document titled “A Plain Account to the Strategy, Work and Processes of the Innovation Vitality Team” (pub. March 2021). This legislation suggests an intermediate step, as all three conferences have very different processes and procedures. It was noted that questions still linger from the letter of Concern sent earlier this year around roles and responsibilities, and the mechanism in which different stakeholders can make their voices heard.

A Research and Development Group will be established for one or two years, to do fact finding, to research what is happening now and to make recommendations moving forward. Vitality projects will be embedded in each conference. Marginalized voices will be intentionally placed at the center of the conversation.

Erin Day proposed an amendment by substitution to the petition:

Amend the motion on p14 of the Addendum by changing “no less than 7” to “no fewer than 70 percent”, a change made in the PNW last night. The petition was adopted without the amendment in OI. Two congruent, one to figure out. Lisa Talbott made the motion to amend, which was seconded by Dan Wilcox.

Discussion: none

**Vote on amendment** – Bishop Elaine called for the vote Yes 42 / No 4 / Total 46, Motion passed. Evangelism video shown.

**Vote on amended petition** – Bishop Elaine called for vote Yes 43 / No 2 / Total 45, Motion passed.

Answering God’s call to Mission video shown.

**2022 Budget final discussion** – Jim Alter Pre-Conference Handbook p39-44/p11-13

On behalf of CFA, Jim Alter moved adoption of the 2022 Budget.

Discussion: none

**Vote** – Bishop Elaine called for vote Yes 41 / No 1 / Total 42, Motion passed  
Evangelism video shown.

**Nominations Report discussion** – Carlo Rapanut Addendum Pre-Conference Handbook p4-10  
Changes on p5: Conference Finance Administration (CFA)- Cosette Kilfoyle, lay, K; Conference Youth & Young Adult Ministries (CY&YAM)- Jeremy Beckett, lay, SC

Discussion:

A question on region for Jeremy. It is South Central (SC).

Are nominations from floor allowed? “Yes”. Nico Reijns- “With consent of chair of AK Vitality Team, I would like to nominate myself, Nico Reijns to be in that clergy vacancy. The bishop noted the need to recuse ourselves in moments of conflict of interest within the groups that are responsible for substantial funds.

Vote on nomination of Nico Reijns being added to nominations report on Vitality Team.

**Vote** – Bishop Elaine called for vote                      Yes 44 / No 2 / Total 46, Motion passed

For nominations report as amended:

**Vote** – Bishop Elaine called for vote                      Yes 43 / No 0 / Total 43, Motion passed

Zylophone performance video shown

Bishop Elaine expressed her thanks to all who prepared the report and all who would be serving, a great sign of faithful discipleship.

**Commissioning Litany** (video) –

Then followed the traditional time of commissioning, as is the custom in the AK Annual Conference, recognizing those who have come to serve. In earlier days all appointed to Alaska came as missionaries through the Board of Global Ministries and were commissioned as such. Since that tradition stopped, the Alaska Conference has continued to commission those who are set apart as a covenant community called to serve here in Alaska. The commissioning service with questions was recorded on Zoom June 11, 2021. Those commissioned included:

Maria Caprezio (Chevi) Crookes to Anchorage, UM Church of Every Nation; David Owsley to Ketchikan; Lucas Boomsma to Seward/Moose Pass; April Hall to Kenai/Nikiski; Ken Hoepner to Anchorage, Anchor Park.

Questions were asked and answered by these servants of God. Then a prayer was given by Carlo. The sign of the cross is a commission to mission. Ours has evolved over time regarding what it looks like. Each one commissioned will receive a cross made by a lay person of St. John UMC. It is carved from Alaskan birch wood, from Birchwood Camp. “Let them be a sign you are called to Alaska’s mission campus.”

A Wesleyan prayer was then led by those just commissioned. A testament: the spirit of God knows no boundaries of time or space. We are connected.

**Closing Words & Recess**—

Bishop Elaine Stanovsky offered words of welcome and gracious celebration for those newly commissioned. We’ve done work and lived the life transitions, life passages. Appointments being one. With regard to our new marriage with PNW, we will have the appointments read at 2pm tomorrow. Following that time, the whole GNW Episcopal area will meet together. There are ordination sessions later this week online. These are the unfolding of Annual Conference actions. Annual Conference is being stretched out in a long way. It started in Oregon Idaho in April and awards will be in September.

Bishop Stanovsky adjourned the meeting while observing the Alaska Annual Conference is in the midst of making a turn. Rather than a sharp turn, it is trying to make an intentional, planned, gentle, life-giving turn that shifts from a Missionary Conference to a mission district relationship

with the PNW Annual Conference. The bishop affirmed the forward looking, discerning, initiative, and actions taken over many years. "I want to honor the work that has been done to make this happen." She reminded the conference that in the midst of it all, love knows no end. Love can dismantle racism. Love can heal the scars of colonialism. Love can bring Alaska and Pacific Northwest (PNW) into mutually respectful relationship. Love can open our hearts to become more than we can ask or imagine. Love can make us a beloved community." She offered her blessings as we enter into a new appointment year; God bless and keep you. The year ahead holds great promise.

Close time: 2:59pm

**PETITION TO THE 2021 ALASKA CONFERENCE**

TITLE: SUPPORT FOR ALASKA OMNIBUS PROPOSAL PETITION # 1

*ACTION TO BE VOTED ON: (Please state the motion in its simplest form, addressing one issue only, exactly what action is required. If you wish to submit additional supporting rationale, it must be typewritten on additional, separate sheets. Copies of up to two pages will be included in the Pre-Conference Handbook. Members will vote only on the action as boxed below.)*

The Alaska United Methodist Conference supports and endorses the Alaska Omnibus Proposal and the petition submitted by its General Conference delegation and others. The AUMC further urges the General Conference to adopt the petition, which can be found, along with supporting documentation at this site on the World Wide Web:  
<https://alaskaumc.files.wordpress.com/2021/01/the-alaska-omnibus-proposal-introduction-legislation.pdf>

**RATIONALE:**

The Alaska Omnibus Proposal has as its primary goal getting around the impasse between those who support making the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation or the Christmas Covenant first on the agenda by including both in one petition to be considered together and adopted at the same time on one vote.

TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY: Publicity to be managed by the Committee on Communication

(Name of committee, board, commission, agency)

COSTS: 0 If a cost is involved, what committee/board/agency will be responsible for including this cost in its budget? Not Applicable

If this cost impacts the Conference Budget, has approval been received from the Council on Finance and Administration? NA

If not, then from whom? NA

When will it be completed? 06Sep22 at GC Close How will you judge its effectiveness?  
(be specific) Adoption of Alaska Omnibus Proposal at General Conference

CONTACT PERSON INITIATING THE PETITION: Lonnie D. Brooks

Contact person's phone #: 907-333-4529

E-Mail Address: lonnieinalaska@gmail.com

GROUP REFERRING PETITION TO ANNUAL MEETING: Not Applicable

Group Leader responsible: Not Applicable

Group leader's phone #: Not Applicable

E-Mail Address: Not Applicable

**SEND TO:** [alaskaumc@gmail.com](mailto:alaskaumc@gmail.com)  
Alaska Conference  
1660 Patterson Street  
Anchorage, AK 99504

**MUST BE RECEIVED BY**  
**May 9, 2021**

**Subject:** VALDEZ BARKER-¶¶540, 543, 544, 550-555, 604, 705, 1502, 1504, AND 2556  
**From:** "LONNIE D BROOKS" <lonnieinalaska@gmail.com>  
**Date:** 1/8/2021, 11:55 AM  
**To:** "ABBY PARKER HERRERA" <petitionsecretary@umcgc.org>, "ABBY PARKER HERRERA" <aherrera@umcgc.org>, "AMY VALDEZ BARKER" <amihanvb@gmail.com>, "GARY W. GRAVES" <ggraves@umcgc.org>

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 08JAN21

TO: ABBY PARKER HERRERA

FM: LONNIE BROOKS

CY: GARY GRAVES  
AMY VALDEZ BARKER

SJ: Valdez Barker-BOD ¶¶540, 543, 544, 550-555, 604, 705, 1502, 1504, and 2556

As required in the document "Instructions for Petitions to the 2020 General Conference" I am sending hereto attached a petition of which the suggested title is "Christmas Covenant Combined with Wespath Provisions and Protocol." As required the petition is in two files, one containing the text of the portions of the *Discipline* being proposed for amendment, and the other the 50 word statement of rationale.

This petition is an omnibus petition that is fully compliant with ¶507.2 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* which says "...if two or more paragraphs in the Discipline are so closely related that a change in one affects the others, the petition may call for the amendment of those paragraphs also to make them consistent with one another."

The signatory of record of the petition is the Rev. Ms Amihan Valdez Barker, Deacon, PhD, Reserve Clergy Delegate, North Georgia Annual Conference. She is joined as additional petitioners by the following persons:

Meg Lassiat, Reserve Clergy Delegate  
Indiana Annual Conference

Delegation of the Alaska United Methodist Conference, Whose Members Are as Follows:

Jo Anne Hayden, Lay Delegate, Chair of Delegation  
James M. Doepken, Clergy Delegate  
Lonnie D. Brooks, First Reserve Lay Delegate  
Daniel P. Wilcox, First Reserve Clergy Delegate  
Fran Lynch, Reserve Lay Delegate  
Lisa M. Talbott, Reserve Clergy Delegate  
Kelly Tazuko Marciales, Reserve Lay Delegate  
Bennie Grace Nabua, Reserve Clergy Delegate

The opening session of the upcoming General Conference is 29Aug21 as announced by the Commission on the General Conference. As provided in ¶507.6, petitions are due 230 days prior to that session, which in the current case is 11Jan21. Since today is 08Jan21, this petition is timely, and if found to be compliant with the

instructions must be printed in the ADCA as provided in ¶507.7.

If you have questions about this petition or require additional information, please let me know.

Regards,

Lonnie

— Attachments: —

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06 - CHRISTMAS COVENANT COMBINED WITH WESPATH PROVISIONS AND PROTOCOL_TEXT.docx	94.8 KB
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06 - CHRISTMAS COVENANT COMBINED WITH WESPATH PROVISIONS AND PROTOCOL_RATIONALE.docx	38.7 KB
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ALASKA UNITED METHODIST CONFERENCE  
REQUEST FOR DECLARATORY DECISION OF 22 JUNE 2021

LIST OF INTERESTED PARTIES

Lonnie D. Brooks	lonnieinalaska@gmail.com
Karen Martin Tichenor	hope4glory.kmt@gmail.com
Elaine J.W. Stanovsky	bishop@greaternw.org elainejws@comcast.net
Amy Valdez Barker	amyhanvb@gmail.com
Kim Simpson	kmqsimpson@gmail.com
Gary W. Graves	ggraves@umcgc.org
Sara Hotchkiss	shotchkiss@gcfa.org

# Commission on the General Conference establishes timeline for next steps



Worshippers rise at the opening celebration for the United Methodist 2016 General Conference in Portland, Ore. (Photo by Maile Bradfield, UMNS.)



## Commission on the General Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 18, 2020

The Commission on the General Conference held a two-day virtual gathering December 11-12, 2020 to discuss complex matters concerning the [postponed 2020 General Conference](#) session that is currently set for August 29 - September 7, 2021.

It was decided that the [Technology Study Team](#), must submit their report to the Commission by January 31, 2021. This team is exploring the implications of options for accommodating full

participation at General Conference including, but not limited to, the possibility of utilizing technology and online voting. In advance of their report, it was decided that members of the Commission could observe the team meetings and receive meeting minutes. The Technology Study Team report will be reviewed then discussed at the Commission on the General Conference meeting on February 20<sup>th</sup>.

The Commission affirmed the process for receiving [petitions](#) submitted after the original 230 and 45 day deadlines noting that they will be treated and processed through the existing system of receiving petitions submitted after the deadline. The Committee on Reference is the appropriate body to determine whether petitions submitted after the original 230 and 45 day deadlines should be considered, following the normal procedures and processes already contained within the Plan of Organization and Rules of Order. The process for amending previously submitted petitions was also reviewed. The Commission is asking that, in light of the extenuating circumstances and postponed original start date, staff arrange to gather the Committee on Reference as soon as practical.

It was noted that this is in alignment with the overall understanding of keeping to the original arrangements and deadlines such as election of delegates, selection of legislative committees, agenda, nominations, [theme and logo](#), and the extension of terms of office until lawful successors can be elected and installed. Since the 2020 General Conference was postponed and not cancelled with everything starting over, the arrangements all move forward to the postponed session.

New concerns have been raised by the Commission in light of news about the U.S. Department of State's [Visa Bond Pilot Program](#) that could hinder participants from traveling to General Conference. The program that begins Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> is only slated for six months, but it's uncertain whether these travel restrictions will be extended which could impact attendees of the upcoming session.

As they gather additional information, the Commission's executive committee is reaching out to the Council of Bishops to share information in an effort to expedite decisions surrounding General Conference and other Jurisdictional and Central Conference bodies, while seeking to eliminate duplication in the important work being done by both groups.

"We realize that time is of the essence. However, the reality is that there are parts of the Book of Discipline that do not speak to the issues raised during a pandemic," shared Commission chair Kim Simpson. "There are still a lot of unknown factors and we will have to make a best informed decision with what we have and trust God to guide us to do the best we can for The United Methodist Church."

Though the roll outs of COVID-19 vaccines are encouraging, there are still questions that the Commission on the General Conference is pondering about availability around the world and the virus' duration as they work to ensure attendee safety. In the midst of this they are also faithfully working to meet all legal/policy requirements while ensuring as much global participation as possible and maintaining the integrity of the voting and credentialing processes.

[Daily Christian Advocate](#) publication concerns, given COVID-19's impact on the publishing industry, were also discussed. Minor obvious adjustments such as date changes will be made to the plan of organization and rules of order, agenda and schedule to be relevant to the new dates. One such adjustment example is the designation of Thursdays in Black from Thursday, May 7, 2020 to Thursday, September 2, 2021. The [Thursdays in Black](#) designated date is in solidarity with the World Council of Churches.

A Commission on the General Conference meeting is being scheduled for January to continue ongoing discussions

ALASKA UNITED METHODIST CONFERENCE  
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