



SINGING THE LORD'S SONG

VOTING ITEMS

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Michigan Conference
The United Methodist Church

ANNUAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

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LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE (LC) ASSIGNMENTS

Tuesday, June 1 6pm -- LC1 -- R#2021-10, R#2021-11, R#2021-12

June 1 6pm -- LC2 -- R#2021-16, R#2021-18

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Wednesday, June 2 6pm -- LC5 -- R#2021-9

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June 2 8pm -- LC3 -- R#2021-15, R#2021-19, R#2021-20

June 2 8pm -- LC8 -- R#2021-8, R#2021-13

1 **R#2021-1**

PLENARY

2 **Establish the 2022 Past Service Rate**

3 **Motion:**4 Establish the Michigan Conference 2022 Past Service Rate (PSR) for the Ministers' Reserve Pension Fund
5 (Pre-82) at \$890. The surviving spouse benefit rate shall remain at 85 percent.
67 **Rationale:**8 The PSR of \$890 per year of eligible service provides \$30 increase per year of eligible service for retirees and
9 maintains the required 1.30 ratio relative to the Conference Average Compensation (PSR/CAC) per conference
10 policy.
1112 Reserves invested in the Pre-82 Pension Plan are sufficient to fund the increased rate while a maintaining a
13 fully funded account balance/surplus for future liabilities.
1415 **Submitted by:**

16 Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits

17 Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President

18 Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & Human Resources/Interim CFO
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21
22
2324 **R#2021-2**

PLENARY

25 **Establish the Housing/Rental allowance for retired clergy**
26 **or clergy on medical leave**

27 **Motion:**28 The Michigan Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits moves to establish the Housing/Rental
29 Allowance for retired or clergy on medical leave status (receiving disability benefits) in the Michigan
30 Conference as follows:
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- 32
-
- 33 1. An amount equal to 100% of the retirement and disability plan distributions received during the year
-
- 34 2022 is hereby designated as a rental/housing allowance for each retired and disabled ordained,
-
- 35 commissioned, or licensed clergyperson of The United Methodist Church who is or was a member of
-
- 36 the Michigan Conference at the time of his or her retirement or disability.
-
- 37
-
- 38 2. This rental/housing allowance shall apply to each retired and disabled ordained, commissioned, or
-
- 39 licensed clergyperson who has been granted the retired relationship or placed on medical leave by
-
- 40 the Michigan Conference and whose name and relationship to the conference is recorded in the
-
- 41 Journal of the Michigan Conference or in other appropriate records maintained by the conference.
-
- 42
-
- 43 3. The retirement and disability plan distributions to which this rental/housing allowance applies shall be
-
- 44 the retirement and disability plan distributions resulting from all service of such retired and disabled
-
- 45 ordained, commissioned, or licensed clergypersons from all employment by any local church, annual
-
- 46 conference or institution of The United Methodist Church, or from any other employer who employed
-
- 47 the clergyperson to perform services related to the ministry and who elected to sponsor the retirement
-
- 48 plan and/or welfare plans of The United Methodist Church for such retired clergyperson's retirement
-
- 49 or disability benefits. Retirement distributions include all eligible amounts received from the United
-
- 50 Methodist denominational retirement plan administered by Wespath Benefits & Investments.
-
- 51
-
- 52 4. The amount of the housing/rental allowance that may be excluded is limited to the lesser of: a) The
-
- 53 amount designated as the housing/rental allowance, or b) The amount actually expended for
-
- 54 housing/rent, or c) The fair rental value of housing as required by law.

Rationale:

The United Methodist Church has and functions through Ministers of the Gospel who are duly ordained or licensed. The practice of The United Methodist Church is to provide a parsonage or housing allowance as a part of the gross compensation for each of its active ordained or licensed ministers. Pensions paid to retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers of the United Methodist Church are considered deferred compensation and are paid to said retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers in consideration of previous active service. The Internal Revenue Service has recognized that the Michigan Conference is the appropriate body to designate a housing/rental allowance for retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers who are members of this conference.

Submitted by:

Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits
 Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President
 Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & Human Resources/Interim CFO

R#2021-3**PLENARY****2022 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan****Motion:**

Authorize the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) to review and approve the 2022 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan (CBFP), and subsequent year CBFP plans upon the successful completion and receipt of a favorable "letter of opinion" from Wespath Benefits & Investments.

[NOTE: Due to Wespath's timeline, their review and "letter of opinion" cannot be completed by the conference deadline for submitting resolutions. The 2021 CBFP favorable "letter of opinion" as well as prior year approval letters are recorded and available through the Conference Benefits Department.]

Rationale:

Per 2012 General Conference action, all annual conferences are required to develop, adopt, and implement a comprehensive funding plan encompassing all conference benefit obligations. The funding plan must be submitted to Wespath Benefits & Investments for review. After receiving a favorable, written opinion from the Wespath actuaries, it must be approved annually by the annual conference.

Submitted by:

Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits
 Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President
 Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & Human Resources/Interim CFO

R#2021-4**PLENARY****Authorization for CBOPHB to address claims****Motion:**

Authorize the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) to negotiate, compromise, submit to arbitration, or retain legal counsel regarding any claims for benefits that may arise under the Michigan Conference Benefits Plans. This includes the current Michigan Conference Group Health Care Plan, the Michigan Conference Lay Employee Retirement and Welfare plans, the United Methodist Clergy Retirement

1 and Welfare Plans, as well as other plans instituted in the future. The CBOPHB will be considered the final
 2 appeal and have final authority to decide any issue in the event of a dispute or disagreement by a participant.
 3

4 **Rationale:**

5 Per The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, the Conference Board of Pension & Health
 6 Benefits is the responsible entity to administer and ensure the accuracy of conference related benefits, as
 7 well as review participant inquiries or discrepancies.
 8

9 **Submitted by:**

10 Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits
 11 Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President
 12 Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & Human Resources/Interim CFO
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17 **R#2021-5**

LC 7

18 **Conference Policy on Use of Proceeds**
 19 **from Sale & Accumulated Assets of Local Church Properties**
 20

21 **Motion:**

- 22 (A) Following the closure or discontinuance of a local church, whenever the conference Board of
 23 Trustees disposes of any real property or other assets, the proceeds from the sale thereof shall be
 24 distributed in the following order of priority:
 25 (1) Outstanding secured loans shall be repaid.
 26 (2) Expenses, including but not limited to utility payments, legal fees, closing costs, necessary
 27 improvements, maintenance, and upkeep incurred in connection with the asset disposition, shall be
 28 reimbursed.
 29 (3) Outstanding health insurance and/or pension obligations shall be paid to the conference.
 30 (4) Outstanding ministry shares and/or district apportionments for the year in which the church closed
 31 shall be paid to the conference and district, respectively.
 32 (5) Any identifiable unused grant funds and outstanding unsecured loans shall be returned to the
 33 agencies from whence they came.
 34
- 35 (B) Following the aforesaid, any remaining proceeds shall be distributed as follows:
 36 (1) Fifty percent shall be given to the Council on Finance and Administration, which shall either use the
 37 funds for capital expenditures or shall earmark the funds for future capital expenditures (including,
 38 but not limited to capital expenditures for new church starts).
 39 (2) Fifty percent shall be given to the district and shall be distributed by the district leadership team (or
 40 equivalent structure) in accordance with ¶¶ 2549.7 and 212 of the 2016 Book of Discipline (or the
 41 equivalent paragraphs in any future applicable Book of Discipline), which set forth the requirements
 42 for the use of such funds in urban transitional communities.
 43
- 44 (C) Notwithstanding (B), above, for any church closure or discontinuance in the district containing the City
 45 of Detroit, any proceeds remaining after the payments required by (A), above, shall be distributed as
 46 follows:
 47 (1) Fifty percent shall be given to the Council on Finance and Administration, which shall either use the
 48 funds for capital expenditures or shall earmark the funds for future capital expenditures (including,
 49 but not limited to capital expenditures for new church starts).
 50 (2) Ten percent shall be given to the district and shall be distributed by the district leadership team (or
 51 equivalent structure) in accordance with ¶¶ 2549.7 and 212 of the 2016 Book of Discipline (or the
 52 equivalent paragraphs in any future applicable Book of Discipline), which set forth the requirements
 53 for the use of such funds in urban transitional communities.
 54 (3) Forty percent shall be distributed to the United Methodist Union of Greater Detroit.

1 **Rationale:**

2 This policy contains only one substantive change from the previous policy.

3
4 Closed churches were often many decades old and often served several generations of people throughout
5 the years. Previously, funds distributed to the conference were to be used with priority and emphasis on new
6 church starts. This often meant paying short-term expenses in unstable contexts. Once this money was spent,
7 it was gone forever. The new policy requires the conference to invest its share of the remaining proceeds in
8 capital expenditures. This ensures that proceeds from churches that served generations in the past will be
9 saved and used to serve generations in the future.

10
11 **Submitted by:**

12 Council on Finance and Administration
13 Brad Bartelmay, President
14 Andrew Wayne, Vice President

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19 **R#2021-6**

LC 4

20 **Vote on Which Post-separation Church to Join**

21
22 **Motion:**

23 The 2021 Michigan Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall take a plenary session vote on
24 the following question:

25 Because the Michigan Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church can be offered the opportunity
26 to choose a direction for its future under the proposed Protocol, that direction to be either:

- 27 (1) remaining a Conference within the Post Separation United Methodist Church, or
28 (2) Becoming a Conference within a new Traditional expression of Methodism whose policies include the
29 2016 Book of Discipline (as amended through Feb 28, 2019) language on “homosexuality,” same
30 gender marriage and LGBTQIA+ ordination.

31
32 If agreed to, this vote will be taken without further debate and this item will be scheduled for a vote no later
33 than 2PM on the last full day of the 2021 Annual Conference, to ensure full participation of delegates.

34
35 **Rationale:**

36 It is expected that the 2022 General Conference will adopt changes in the Book of Discipline which allow for
37 Annual Conferences to amicably depart from the entity “The United Methodist Church” and join a new
38 denomination as described in the new enabling legislation as: The Traditionalist UMC which will maintain the
39 current stance of the Discipline regarding the practice of homosexuality. It will emphasize unity around
40 doctrine, mission, and standards, leaner denominational structure, greater local flexibility, and accountable
41 discipleship. The results of this vote will then allow discernment and decision process to begin concerning
42 future affiliations for individual Churches, individual members and clergy members.

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44 **Submitted by:**

45 Robert Hegel,
46 Mio UMC

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1 **R#2021-7**

LC 4

2 **Creation of District Working Group**

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4 **Motion:**

5 The Michigan Conference shall create a District Working Group.

6
7 The working group shall develop a plan and submit legislation to the 2022 Annual Conference to reduce the
8 number of Districts by at least one District effective no later than January 1, 2023.9
10 The membership of the working group shall be comprised of the Bishop, the Director of Connectional
11 Ministries, a Cabinet Representative, a Conference Leadership Council Representative, a Council on Finance
12 and Administration Representative, and two at-large members selected by the Bishop.13
14 The working group shall be amenable to the Conference Leadership Council.15
16 **Rationale:**17 The District Working group will provide a holistic assessment of the Michigan Conference's Districts in response
18 to projected membership decline and departure of congregations in the coming years.19
20 **Submitted by:**21 Conference Leadership Council
22 Rev. Dr. Darryl Totty, CLC President
23 Second Grace United Methodist Church, Detroit24
25 Mrs. Katja Falker, CLC Vice President
26 Grace United Methodist Church, Houghton
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3233 **R#2021-8**

LC 8

34 **Retiree Group Health Care Plan, DAC Health Care Plan Amendment**

35
36 **Motion:**

37 Insert a new ¶3. Subsequent numbers will be reordered accordingly. New Plan would read as follows:

38
39 **RETIREE GROUP HEALTH CARE PLAN**40 **Introduction:**41 This section describes the provisions and requirements of the Detroit Annual Conference group
42 retiree health care plan. All available benefits are at all times subject to and may be limited, denied, or
43 terminated based on applicable underwriting provisions, contract terms, eligibility rules, and premium
44 payment requirements. All required submissions, underwriting, and payments must be timely made. It
45 is the subscriber's responsibility to understand the specific rules relating to eligibility for coverage in
46 retirement prior to the subscriber's retirement date. Questions may be directed to the Conference
47 Benefits Officer or conveyed in writing to the Board of Pension & Health Benefits. Do not rely on
48 verbal responses to general questions raised in informational meetings or provided by
49 representatives other than the Board of Pension & Health Benefits.50 It is crucial that clergy who have served appointments during their career in Extension Ministries or
51 another Annual Conference are knowledgeable regarding years of service credit, coverage, and cost
52 sharing in order to effectively plan for retirement.
53

1 **Definition of Terms:**

- 2 **1. Years of Service Credit for Health Benefits in Retirement:** Years of Service in Eligible Detroit
- 3 Conference Episcopal Appointments used to calculate eligibility and funding levels for health
- 4 benefits in retirement.
- 5 **2. Eligible Detroit Conference Episcopal Appointment:** An Episcopal appointment is defined
- 6 when the Detroit Annual Conference is the responsible agency for the clergyperson's benefits.
- 7 a. Some Extension Ministry Appointments will be eligible for credit toward health benefits in
- 8 retirement. Others will not, depending on the agency responsible for the clergyperson's
- 9 benefits.
- 10 b. Appointments to other conferences/agencies while maintaining membership in the Detroit
- 11 Annual Conference are not eligible for credit toward health benefits in retirement.
- 12 c. Reciprocal Agreement with West Michigan Conference
- 13 i. A Detroit Conference clergy member will receive credit toward health benefits in
- 14 retirement for Eligible Episcopal appointments in the West Michigan Conference.
- 15 ii. A West Michigan Conference Eligible Episcopal Appointment is defined when the West
- 16 Michigan Conference is the responsible agency for the clergyperson's benefits.
- 17 iii. A Detroit Conference clergy member serving a West Michigan Conference appointment
- 18 must serve a Detroit Conference Eligible Episcopal Appointment and be enrolled in the
- 19 Detroit Conference Active Group Health Care Plan immediately preceding retirement in
- 20 order to be eligible for retiree health benefits. (reference: Eligible Subscribers 1.b. below)
- 21 **3. Years of service in another United Methodist Conference will be eligible for Service Credit**
- 22 **for Health Benefits if the clergy member has transferred membership to the Michigan**
- 23 **Conference, served a minimum of ten continuous years prior to retirement in the Michigan**
- 24 **Conference, and participated in the Michigan Conference health care plan during the years**
- 25 **of service in Michigan Conference.**
- 26 **4. Mandatory Retirement:** Defined as retirement on July 1 after having attained age 72.
- 27 **5. Full Retirement:** Defined as retirement at age 65 or with 40 years of service under appointment
- 28 as an ordained minister or local pastor. The years of service for retirement may or may not be the
- 29 same years of service used to calculate health benefit credit depending on the type of
- 30 appointments served.
- 31 **6. Early Retirement:** Defined as retirement at age 62 or with 30 years of service under appointment
- 32 as an ordained minister or local pastor. The years of service for retirement may or may not be the
- 33 same years of service used to calculate health benefit credit depending on the type of
- 34 appointments served.
- 35 **7. 20 Year Rule:** Defined as retirement under age 62 with 20 years of service under appointment as
- 36 an ordained minister or local pastor. The years of service for retirement may or may not be the
- 37 same years of service used to calculate health benefit credit depending on the type of
- 38 appointments served.
- 39

40 **Rationale:**

- 41 1. The United Methodist Church is a connectional body, recognizing the ordination and service across
- 42 conference lines.
- 43 2. The Michigan Conference prides itself on successfully recruiting exceptional clergy from other
- 44 conferences to serve in Michigan.
- 45 3. Bringing in experienced pastors is good for Michigan Conference.
- 46 4. Pastors starting their career in another conference then moving to the Michigan Conference for an
- 47 appointment should not be penalized in their retirement after serving at least ten years in the Michigan
- 48 Conference.
- 49

50 **Submitted by:**

51 Rev. Dirk Elliott, Director of Congregational Vibrancy

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53

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1 **R#2021-9**

LC 5

Recognize the Unborn Baby

Motion:

That the Michigan Area Annual Conference recognizes the unborn baby in the womb as a full human person from the moment of conception.

Rationale:

Scripturally and scientifically the unborn baby is fully human from the moment of conception.

Scripturally,

1. Psalm 139:13 tells us that God “knitted me together in my mother’s womb.”
2. In Luke 1, Mary, pregnant with Jesus, met her cousin Elizabeth, who was pregnant with John the Baptist. Elizabeth told Mary “As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ear, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.” v. 44.

Scientifically, virtually every embryology textbook affirms that conception is the beginning of new life.

1. “In that fraction of a second when the chromosomes form pairs, the sex of the new child will be determined, hereditary characteristics received from each parent will be set, and a new life will have begun.” Human Development: The Span of Life, pp 28-29, (1974).
2. “Although life is a continuous process, fertilization is a critical landmark because, under ordinary circumstances, a new genetically distinct human organism is thereby formed.” Human Embryology and Teratology, (1996).

Finally, prochoice intellectuals and scientists recognize that the unborn baby is a human being.

1. “There is no doubt that from the first moments of its existence an embryo conceived from human sperm and egg is a human being.” Peter Singer, Bioethics Professor, Princeton University in Practical Ethics, third edition, p 73.
2. “Perhaps the most straightforward relation between you and me on the one hand and every human fetus on the other is this: All are living members of the same species, homo sapiens.” David Doonin, PhD, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado Boulder, A Defense of Abortion, p 20.

Submitted by:

Mike Cooper and Rebecca Cooper, laity Gaylord First United Methodist Church sadiebuster333@gmail.com

39 **R#2021-10**

LC 1

Affirm Bishop’s Anti-Bias Anti-Racism Working Group

Motion:

The Anti-Bias Anti-Racism Working Group moves to affirm and support the following purpose, membership, organization, and amenability:

Purpose: The working group shall provide resourcing, support, and advocacy for local congregations and pastors that are engaged in anti-bias and anti-racism work, dialogue, and study.

Membership: The membership of the current working group will continue. The group was formed with these criteria in mind: The Bishop, in consultation with the Chair of the Conference Division on Religion & Race, the Associate Director for Multi-Cultural Vibrancy, and the Director of Connectional Ministry, appointed members to ensure the group has at least 12 and no more than 16 members. Attention was given to age, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, geographic region, and previous experience with anti-bias and anti-racism work. Ex officio members

1 are: The Bishop, the Associate Director for Multi-Cultural Vibrancy, and the Director of Connectional
2 Ministry.

3
4 *Organization:* The Working Group has two co-convenors and organizes itself as it sees fit to
5 accomplish its work.

6
7 *Amenability:* The task force is amenable to the Bishop and will offer regular reports to the CLC for
8 consultation and advisement.
9

10
11 **Rationale:**

12 The Michigan Conference supports the Bishop's Anti-Bias Anti-Racism Working Group as an expression of its
13 commitment to anti-bias and anti-racism work as essential to our journey with Jesus. It is important to create
14 opportunities for the growing awareness to catalyze transformation of individuals, congregations, and The
15 Michigan Conference. The Anti-Bias Anti-Racism Working will strive to help The Michigan Conference
16 understand the role of bias and racism in our local churches and conference structure, increase our capacity,
17 as well as skills and resources, for some challenging, yet truthful discussions, and create a framework to take
18 actions that address racial equity and justice.
19

20 The members of the Working Group are:

21 Ernestine (Tina) Campbell (*Detroit: Second Grace UMC member and Convener of the Board of*
22 *Justice's Division on Religion & Race*)

23 Sang Chun (*Pastor at Atherton/Phoenix United Methodist Churches*)

24 April Gutierrez (*Adrian: First UMC member*)

25 Jennifer Hahm (*Lansing: Grace UMC member and Ministerial Assessment Specialist with the Board*
26 *of Ordained Ministry*)

27 Robin Lees (*Greensky Hill Indian Mission UMC member*)

28 Sonya Luna (*Conference Coordinator of Hispanic/Latinx Ministries*)

29 Marshall Murphy (*pastor of Harper Woods: Redeemer UMC*)

30 Simmie Proctor (*Committee on African American Ministries co-chair*)

31 Albert Rush (*pastor of Eastpointe: Emmanuel UMC and Convener of Board of Justice's Division on*
32 *Church & Society*)

33 B. Kevin Smalls (*pastor of Southfield: Hope UMC*)

34 Shonagh Taruza (*Minister of Outreach, Social Justice, and Diversity at Ann Arbor: First UMC*)

35 Matt Weiler (*pastor of community formation, Kalamazoo: First UMC*)

36 April Gutierrez and B. Kevin Smalls serve as co-convenors
37
38

39 **Submitted by:**

40 April Gutierrez, Adrian: First UMC, Co-Convenor of the Bishop's Anti-Bias Anti Racism Working Group

41 B. Kevin Smalls, Southfield: Hope UMC, Co-Convenor of the Bishop's Anti-Bias Anti Racism Working Group
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46 **R#2021-11**

LC 1

47 **Training and Support for Cross Racial/Cross Cultural Appointments**
48

49 **Motion:**

50 The Michigan Conference directs the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Cabinet to collaboratively create and
51 implement training and support for clergy and congregations in Cross Racial/Cross Cultural appointments. In
52 creating and implementing this training, they shall request input from and collaboration with the Bishop's
53 Office, particularly the Bishop's Anti-Bias Anti-Racism Working Group. A report shall be provided to update
54 the 2022 Annual Conference.
55

Rationale:

An increasing number of cross-racial/cross-cultural appointments are happening in the Michigan Conference. Clergy and congregations in these appointments require and have requested training and support.

Submitted by:

April Gutierrez, Adrian: First UMC, Co-Convenor of the Bishop's Anti-Bias Anti Racism Working Group

B. Kevin Smalls, Southfield: Hope UMC, Co-Convenor of the Bishop's Anti-Bias Anti Racism Working Group

R#2021-12**LC 1****Anti-Bias Anti-Racism Training for Active Clergy, Conference and District Staff****Motion:**

The Michigan Conference will require all active clergy, Conference staff, and District staff to attend anti-bias and anti-racism training at least once every four years. The Board of Ordained Ministry and the Bishop's Anti-Bias Anti-Racism Working Group are invited to develop this training, and in doing so will request collaboration with the Bishop's Office. The first round of training shall begin in 2022 and be completed no later than Dec. 31, 2024. A report shall be provided to update the 2022 Annual Conference.

Rationale:

This training will help to build the capacity of clergy and staff across the Conference to be leaders who address bias and racism. Anti-bias and anti-racism work is a priority for the Conference and essential to our journey with Jesus.

Submitted by:

April Gutierrez, Adrian: First UMC, Co-Convenor of the Bishop's Anti-Bias Anti Racism Working Group

B. Kevin Smalls, Southfield: Hope UMC, Co-Convenor of the Bishop's Anti-Bias Anti Racism Working Group

R#2021-13**LC 8****Amend Michigan Conference Protection Policy—Online Ministry****Motion:**

Amend the Michigan Conference "Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults" by addition of a new sub section D. in Section III: Care Supervision:

D. Online or Virtual Ministry

1. Always have at least two unrelated care providers in the on-line group meeting.
2. Use "ministry based" accounts instead of personal accounts.
 - a. The host must be a ministry leader or trusted background checked adult and should understand the platform they are using, including, but not limited to, knowing when and how to mute both audio and video.
3. Maintain the five-year rule (care providers are at least five years older than the people they are working with).
4. Use group pages – supervisors and parents included (Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.).
5. Transparency is important. Ensure all digital meetings are logged with time, date, and attendance with district/conference administration.
6. Create a regular schedule so parents, youth, and children know when a ministry-based account is being used.

- 1 7. Require staff and volunteers to use their real names and have a log of usernames. It is important for
- 2 people to know who they are talking with. Encourage youth to use their real name as well.
- 3 8. When using a virtual breakout room option, at least two care providers must be in each virtual
- 4 breakout room. If at least two care providers are not available for each virtual breakout room, the use
- 5 of virtual breakout rooms is not permitted.
- 6 9. Create a "Virtual Meeting Covenant" that includes behavioral expectations and consequences for
- 7 violations.
- 8 10. Dress appropriately.
- 9 11. Be mindful of surroundings. (You may need to use a backdrop or background).
- 10 12. Consider recording the group time (transparency and accountability), if you have written permission
- 11 from minors and parents.
- 12 13. Keep a log of any 1-1 sessions with specifics of time, length, conversation. Make sure to share these
- 13 with supervisor (as confidentially appropriate) for transparency. This should be done for all digital and
- 14 in-person 1-1 sessions.
- 15 14. Be aware of who has signed media permission and be mindful of what you have permission to share
- 16 in social media, newsletters, and online.
- 17 15. Ensure that the virtual hosts are capable and knowledgeable of online platforms to ensure the safety
- 18 of the group.
- 19 16. Leaders need to be mindful that online church ministry needs to have the same boundaries and
- 20 language that is used with in-person meetings.
- 21

22 **Rationale:**

23 Given the rapidly changing landscape of ministry and the increase in virtual ministry, the protection policy

24 team has deemed it necessary to add a section to the policy to address these needs. This policy addition has

25 been approved by Church Mutual (the Michigan Conference's liability insurance carrier) and by the

26 conference Chancellor. This addition applies only to the Michigan Conference and districts and does not

27 apply to other entities (local churches, cooperative ministry settings, etc.).

28

29 **Submitted by:**

30 Michigan Conference Protection Policy Team

31 Chairperson, Judy Herriff, jherriff@gmail.com, 517-604-1755

32 Vice-chairperson, Marguerite Zawislak, mozawislak@gmail.com, 248-524-9323

33

34

35

36

37 **R#2021-14**

LC 7

38 **Inclusiveness of the Michigan Conference**

39 **Motion:**

40 Amend the Plan of Organization by addition of a new section §1 as indicated below and renumber the

41 remaining sections and sub-sections accordingly:

42

43

44 **§1. Inclusiveness of The Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church**

45 The Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of

46 sacred worth. All persons without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity,

47 relationship, ability, national origin, status, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its

48 worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as

49 baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members

50 in any local church in the Conference. In The Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church,

51 no local church or other organizational unit of the conference shall be structured so as to exclude any

52 member or any constituent body of the conference because of race, color, gender, sexual orientation,

53 gender identity, relationship, ability, national origin, status, or economic condition. Nor shall any lay or

54 clergy member be denied access to an equal place in the life, worship, ministry, governance of the

55 conference, local church, or other organizational unit of the conference because of race, color,

gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, relationship, ability, national origin, status, or economic condition.

Rationale:

In light of past actions of General Conferences and uncertainties of future actions, the Michigan Conference seeks to be clear about the full inclusion of all people, especially LBGTQIA+ people, in the life, worship, ministry and governance of the conference.

Submitted by:

Christina A. Wright (617) 875-6955 cwright1223@gmail.com
 Mark E. Thompson (269) 591-0731 mark757984@gmail.com
 And seven others

R#2021-15

LC 3

Transfer Camping Funds into MAUC Foundation Account

Motion:

The Council on Finance and Administration of the Michigan Annual Conference (MAC) shall transfer 50% of the New Church Start/Camp Refurbishment Fund (#2097) and all of the Camp Refurbishment Available Fund (#2098) to the Methodist Camping General Investment Account of the United Methodist Foundation of Michigan. The full transfer of these funds shall occur by no later than June 30, 2023.

Rationale:

In 2000 the Detroit Annual Conference established a fund with 50% designated to new church starts and 50% designated for “maintenance” of camping properties. The proceeds of this fund which are designated for camping are held in the aforementioned accounts and in the aforementioned proportions in the MAC’s general ledger.

In 2015 the Detroit and West Michigan Annual conferences established Michigan Area United Methodist Camping (MAUMC) Inc., but did not act to transfer these designated funds to the new corporation. By this motion, management of these funds will transfer from the Council on Finance and Administration to the United Methodist Foundation which manages these types of assets for MAUMC Inc.

The reason for extending the transfer across a maximum of 24 months is to mitigate the impact of this transfer on the cash flow of the MAC.

Submitted by:

Stuart Smith, Chair
 Michigan Area United Methodist Camping

R#2021-16

LC 2

Addition to the Michigan Conference Parsonage Guidelines

Motion:

The following paragraph will be added to Section IV of the current Parsonage Guidelines, after the paragraph currently under “Pastor Leaving.”

The Cabinet and Board of Ordained Ministry recommend that outgoing pastors be given at least the last two weeks (including two Sundays) of the appointment off from all pastoral responsibilities. This

1 time off is not be considered vacation time and can be adapted or negotiated on a case-by-case basis
 2 in consultation with the District Superintendent. The purpose of this time off is to help the pastor enter
 3 their new appointment rested. It also gives an emotional buffer for the congregation between the
 4 outgoing pastor's last Sunday and the incoming pastor's first Sunday.
 5

6 **Rationale:**

7 Establishing this "2 weeks/2 Sundays off for transition" practice as normative for our Conference will create
 8 consistency among districts, congregations, and ministry settings. While individual District Superintendents,
 9 clergy, and congregations have followed this practice for many years, it has not been uniformly understood or
 10 implemented. This addition to the Parsonage Guidelines will grant both authority and flexibility as it is needed.
 11 The current Parsonage Guidelines, approved by Annual Conference vote in 2017, can be found here:
 12 <https://michiganumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Parsonage-Policy.pdf>.
 13

14 **Submitted by:**

15 Board of Ordained Ministry
 16 Rev. Jennifer Browne, Director of Clergy Excellence
 17 with support from the Michigan Conference Appointive Cabinet
 18
 19
 20
 21

22 **R#2021-17**

LC 6

23 **Let's Overcome Christian Nationalism**

24 **Motion:**

25 We, members of the Michigan United Methodist Church Annual Conference, were horrified at the assault on
 26 the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. We were dismayed by the use of Christian symbols during the violent
 27 attack on the Congress. The sight of the cross, the Christian flag, "Jesus Saves" signs, and a "Jesus 2020"
 28 flag modeled on the Trump campaign flag – along with the prayers professing a belief in God empowering the
 29 insurrectionists onto victory – abused Christianity. We became more aware of the dangerous ideology of
 30 Christian nationalism.
 31

32 Our United Methodist faith compels us to recognize that Christian nationalism fuses Christian and American
 33 identities so as to dishonor both the Christian faith and America's constitutional democracy. We understand
 34 that Christian nationalism often overlaps white supremacy, patriarchy, heteronormativity, authoritarianism,
 35 and militarism. We believe that no religion, including Christianity, should be privileged by government policies.
 36 "The United Methodist Church has for many years supported the separation of church and state." (SOCIAL
 37 PRINCIPLES)
 38

- 39 1. The Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church condemns the use of Christian symbols and
 40 prayers by the attackers on the U.S. Congress at the Capitol on January 6, 2021. We invite our clergy
 41 and lay leaders to condemn that attack and armed ventures into the Lansing State Capitol, as well as
 42 any future attacks.
- 43 2. The Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church disavows the lies spread about the 2020
 44 Presidential Election that incited the mob carrying Christian symbols to violently attack Congress while
 45 it was certifying the Electoral College votes on January 6, 2021. We assert that the election of
 46 President Biden was free, fair, and legal.
- 47 3. We call upon our pastors and lay leaders to lead studies of Christian nationalism using resources
 48 including www.ChristiansAgainstChristianNationalism.org; "The Capitol Insurrection Was as Christian
 49 Nationalist as It Gets," www.nytimes.com/2021/02/28/opinion/christian-nationalists; *Taking America
 50 Back for God* by Whitehead and Perry; *The Power Worshipers: Inside the Dangerous Rise of
 51 Religious Nationalists* by Katherine Steward; and *White Too Long, The Legacy of White Supremacy in
 52 American Christianity* by Robert Long.
- 53 4. We invite our clergy and laypeople to join Walter Brueggemann, Tony Campolo, Sister Simone
 54 Campbell, Jim Wallis, Jim Winkler, Rich Peacock, Duane Miller, Diana Spitnale Miller, Louise Ott,

1 Bob Schoenhals, Doug Vernon, Tom Macaulay, and thousands of Christians to sign this statement at
2 www.ChristiansAgainst Christian Nationalism.org, which follows:

3
4 “As Christians, our faith teaches us everyone is created in God’s image and commands us to love
5 one another. As Americans, we value our system of government and the good that can be
6 accomplished in our constitutional democracy. **Today, we are concerned about a persistent threat
7 to both our religious communities and our democracy – Christian nationalism.**

8
9 Christian nationalism seeks to merge Christian and American identities, distorting both the Christian
10 faith and America’s constitutional democracy. Christian nationalism demands Christianity be
11 privileged by the State and implies that to be a good American one must be Christian. It often
12 overlaps with and provides cover for white supremacy and racial subjugation. **We reject this
13 damaging political ideology** and invite our Christian brothers and sisters to join us in opposing this
14 threat to our faith and to our nation.

15
16 As Christians, we are bound to Christ, not by citizenship, but by faith. We believe that:

- 17 • People of all faiths and none have the right and responsibility to engage constructively in the
18 public square.
- 19 • Patriotism does not require us to minimize our religious convictions.
- 20 • One’s religious affiliation, or lack thereof, should be irrelevant to one’s standing in the civic
21 community.
- 22 • Government should not prefer one religion over another or religion over nonreligion.
- 23 • Religious instruction is best left to our houses of worship, to other religious institutions and
24 families.
- 25 • America’s historic commitment to religious pluralism enables faith communities to live in
26 civic harmony with one another without sacrificing our theological convictions.
- 27 • Conflating religious authority with political authority is idolatrous and often leads to
28 oppression of minority and other marginalized groups as well as the spiritual
29 impoverishment of religion.
- 30 • We must stand up to and speak out against Christian nationalism, especially when it
31 inspires acts of violence and intimidation – including vandalism, bomb threats, arson, hate
32 crimes, and attacks on houses of worship – against religious communities at home and
33 abroad.

34
35 Whether we worship at a church, mosque, synagogue, or temple, America has no second-class
36 faiths. All are equal under the U.S. Constitution. As Christians we must speak in one voice
37 condemning Christian nationalism as a distortion of the gospel of Jesus and a threat to American
38 democracy.”

39
40 **Rationale:**

41 The past cannot be forgotten; therefore, those who attacked Congress and behave as Christian nationalists
42 must be held accountable. Many of Trump’s followers attached a messianic character to his presidency. But
43 we, Michigan United Methodists, do not believe that God ordains politicians.

44
45 We confess that we have morally failed - excused ourselves by inattention, tolerance, and cowardice - to
46 minister by naming and calling out the false faith of Christian nationalism. We have avoided applying the
47 commandment against bearing false witness to politicians as described by former President George W. Bush
48 and Senator Mitch McConnell.

49 “I am appalled by the reckless behavior of some political leaders since the election.” (Bush) “The mob was
50 fed lies. They were provoked by the president and other powerful people and they tried to use fear and
51 violence to stop a specific proceeding of the first branch of the federal government which they did not like.”
52 (McConnell)

53
54 “...we know ourselves to be responsible to God for social and political life.” (SOCIAL PRINCIPLES, V. The
55 Political Community) This is a Kairos to proclaim the truth in United Methodist theology and practice sound

1 patriotism. We believe that only devout reason and tough love can drive out hate. Therefore, we minister to
2 overcome the dangerous ideology of Christian nationalism.

3
4 **Submitted by:**

5 Rev. Rich Peacock, retired, First United Methodist Church of Troy

6
7
8
9
10 **R#2021-18**

LC 2

11 **Covenant of Ministry Partnership with the Liberia Annual Conference**

12
13 **Motion:**

14 Be it resolved that the Michigan Annual Conference approve the following new *Covenant of Partnership in*
15 *Ministry and Working Understandings* governing our work with the Liberia Annual Conference.

16
17 **The Covenant**

18 The Liberia Annual Conference and Michigan Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church desire to
19 seek God's will together as we reach out to the world's peoples in both our countries and conferences.
20 Remembering Jesus' words, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul...
21 and with all your mind." This is the greatest commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your
22 neighbor as yourself," (NRSV Mt. 22:37-39), we agree to establish a Partnership in Ministry between our two
23 conferences, and do hereby covenant to:

- 24
25
- 26 1. Continue to support each other by our prayers and the sharing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit with our
27 intellect, our physical being and our resources
 - 28 2. Continue to educate the laity and clergy of both conferences about the faith; ethnic groups, tribes and
29 races; customs; social issues; geography; politics and other aspects of both countries. We shall seek,
30 while learning from each other, to develop connections between individuals, families, communities, and
31 congregations.
 - 32 3. Continue to seek opportunities for two-way visitations, such as Volunteers in Mission teams and to learn
33 from one another.
 - 34 4. Continue to find creative ways in which we can support each other through the established channels of
35 The United Methodist Church.
 - 36 5. Continue to evaluate our Partnership in Ministry relationship at least quadrennially.

37 This Covenant replaces in its entirety the Covenant Relationship document between the Liberia Annual
38 Conference and the Detroit Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church adopted in 1998.

39
40 **Working Understandings**

- 41
- 42 1. The Partnership in Ministry between the Liberia Annual Conference and the Michigan Annual Conference
43 is a mutually agreed upon relationship. The boards, agencies, and districts of the two conferences will be
44 involved in its implementation and evaluation. Any change in this covenant requires mutual agreement.
 - 45 2. The Michigan Conference Board of Global Ministries will represent the Michigan Annual Conference while
46 the Liberia Annual Conference will be represented by its executive committee. Each entity shall
47 designate the persons or groups that will represent it in the administering and evaluation of this covenant.
 - 48 3. Coordination of all partnership activities within a conference shall be the responsibility of the respective
49 conference. The sister conference may appoint a representative to coordinate the work with those
50 responsible within the conference.
 - 51 4. Any request for funding or work teams shall be for projects that have been approved by both the Liberia
52 and Michigan Annual Conference leadership.
 - 53 5. The guiding principle in developing and implementing joint projects shall be "In Mission Together
54 Partnership Covenant" as suggested by the General Board of Global Ministries.
 - 55 6. All projects shall be socially just and ecologically sustainable.
 - 56 7. In regards to Volunteers in Mission teams and visitations, efforts shall be made to
57 a. encourage an exchange of work teams, people working side-by-side in both countries.
58 b. see that teams not displace indigenous labor.
c. seek opportunities for visitations of persons from both conferences.

- 1 d. have any groups from either of the two conferences be inclusive as applicable with regard to
 2 race, tribe, age, sex, financial capability, clergy, laity, and geographical area.
 3 8. Either party may choose to exit the Covenant at any time if the relationship is no longer mutually
 4 beneficial.
 5

6 **Addendum**

7 Any changes to the covenant expressed herein, require the mutual consent of the parties.
 8

9 In the event either party wishes to withdraw from this relationship, a notice is required to be served on the
 10 other party to the covenant following consultations between the parties.
 11

12 And that the Executive Committees of the Liberia Annual Conference and the Liberia Michigan Task Force
 13 shall enforce the execution of this covenant.
 14

15 Approved by the Michigan Annual Conference: _____
 16 Date

17 For the Michigan Annual Conference: _____
 18 Bishop David A. Bard

19 Michigan Conference Secretary: _____
 20 Rev. Joy Barrett
 21

22 Other signatures representing Michigan Conference Board of Global Ministries, Chair of Liberia Partnership in
 23 Ministry, etc.
 24

25 Approved by the Liberia Annual Conference: Feb 22, 2020
 26
 27

28 **Rationale:**

29 This "Covenant" and "Working Understanding" was sent to the Liberia Annual Conference for their approval
 30 and signatures.

- 31 1. The Detroit Annual Conference has been working with the Liberia Annual Conference for over 20
 32 years.
- 33 2. Some churches and individuals of the West Michigan Conference have also been involved in Liberia.
- 34 3. The Detroit Annual Conference helped establish the Bishop Judith Craig Children's Village early in
 35 our relationship to provide a place of love, care and Christian education for orphans during and
 36 following their civil war. Some West Michigan Conference churches have helped provide support and
 37 even funded the building of some of the children's cottages.
- 38 4. The Detroit Annual Conference has been sending Volunteer in Mission teams to work on many
 39 projects to assist in rebuilding churches, schools, hospitals, water wells, etc. in Liberia following the
 40 civil war.
- 41 5. Medical teams from both conferences have assisted with medical care and birthing.
- 42 6. The Detroit Annual Conference has been hosting Liberian Bishops and many leaders as they have
 43 come to share their ministry with our churches and many West Michigan congregations welcomed
 44 them also.
- 45 7. The Detroit Annual Conference has hosted two national Liberia Partner Summits of United Methodist
 46 conferences and local churches working in Liberia.
- 47 8. In April 2018 we provided leadership working with Bishop Samuel Quire and Liberian United
 48 Methodist leaders to develop a five-year ministry and development plan for the Liberia Annual
 49 Conference.
 50

51 **Submitted by:**

52 Rev. Jon Reynolds

53 Chair of the Michigan Conference Liberia Ministry Partnership
 54
 55
 56
 57

1 **R#2021-19**

LC 3

2 **Guidelines for Equitable Compensation Support for 2022**

3
4 **Motion:**5 The Commission on Equitable Compensation (CEC) moves these Conference Guidelines for Equitable
6 Compensation Support for 2022.

- 7
-
- 8 1. Local congregations shall conduct an annual stewardship campaign. Congregations receiving Equitable
-
- 9 Compensation support are expected to participate in ongoing stewardship education and planning
-
- 10 through programs such as the Stewardship Academy offered through the United Methodist Foundation
-
- 11 of Michigan, Roads to Vibrancy, or Local Church Assessment as provided in ¶213 of the United
-
- 12 Methodist Book of Discipline.
-
- 13 2. Local congregations considering requesting an Equitable Compensation grant shall first counsel with
-
- 14 their District Superintendent (DS). Counsel with the DS is required each year a grant is sought.
-
- 15 3. Local congregations requesting an Equitable Compensation grant shall voucher the travel and business
-
- 16 expenses of their pastor according to the guidelines of the Council on Finance and Administration.
-
- 17 4. Local congregations may receive an Equitable Compensation grant for up to four consecutive years,
-
- 18 reducing the original grant amount by 25% each year. Equitable Compensation funds shall not be used
-
- 19 to fund more than the Conference minimum salary.
-
- 20 5. Local congregations receiving Equitable Compensation grants are encouraged to show progress in full
-
- 21 payment of ministry shares.
-
- 22 6. Local congregations anticipating pursuing both capital expenses or capital campaigns and an Equitable
-
- 23 Compensation grant shall counsel with their DS before applying to begin or continue seeking a grant
-
- 24 from the Commission on Equitable Compensation. Projects which solely address building accessibility
-
- 25 will not automatically disqualify an Equitable Compensation grant request.
-
- 26 7. The deadline for grant submission shall be the 25
- th
- day of October preceding the year for which the grant
-
- 27 is sought. Incomplete grant submissions and grant submissions received after the established due date
-
- 28 may be denied. Mid-year grant requests shall be considered at a time mutually agreeable with the
-
- 29 Cabinet and the chairperson of the Commission on Equitable Compensation.
-
- 30 8. Exceptions to these guidelines may be considered upon recommendation of the Bishop and the
-
- 31 Cabinet.
-
- 32

33 **Submitted by:**34 Commission on Equitable Compensation
35 Rev. Don Gotham
36 Interim Chair
37
38
39
4041 **R#2021-20**

LC 3

42 **2022 Minimum Salary Schedule**

43
44 **Motion:**45 The Commission on Equitable Compensation (CEC) moves the following Minimum Salary Schedule be
46 adopted for 2022 by the Michigan Conference.
4748 In addition, the CEC asks churches to budget a minimum of \$1,500 for professional expenses and continuing
49 education, exclusive of mileage reimbursements for each full-time clergy person under appointment. For
50 clergy serving less than full-time, the amount set should equal no less than the appointment percentage (i.e.,
51 a half-time appointment's minimum would be at least \$750, etc.)
52

1 Churches are strongly urged to compensate clergy whose years of service are beyond this chart's years by
 2 considering both years of service as clergy and inflation forces. While electing not to provide clergy with a
 3 raise might alleviate pressure on the church budget, it places unfair stress on clergy and is demoralizing.
 4

Years of Service	Local Pastor			Associate Member			Provisional Member			Full Member		
	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
Year 1	\$37,394	\$37,992	\$38,752	*	*	*	\$41,730	\$42,397	\$43,245	***	***	***
Year 2	\$37,768	\$38,372	\$39,140	*	*	*	\$42,145	\$42,819	\$43,677	***	***	***
Year 3	\$38,143	\$38,753	\$39,528	*	*	*	\$42,562	\$43,243	\$44,109	\$44,526	\$45,238	\$46,143
Year 4	\$38,516	\$39,132	\$39,916	*	*	*	\$42,981	\$43,668	\$44,541	\$44,980	\$45,700	\$46,604
Year 5	\$38,891	\$39,514	\$40,304	\$40,646	\$41,296	\$42,122	\$43,397	\$44,091	\$44,973	\$45,431	\$46,158	\$47,065
Year 6	\$39,267	\$39,895	\$40,692	\$41,049	\$41,706	\$42,543	\$43,813	\$44,514	\$45,505	\$45,879	\$46,613	\$47,526
Year 7	\$39,640	\$40,274	\$41,080	\$41,453	\$42,116	\$42,964	\$44,230	\$44,937	\$45,837	\$46,286	\$47,026	\$47,987
Year 8	\$40,014	\$40,654	\$41,468	\$41,861	\$42,531	\$43,385	\$44,648	\$45,362	\$46,269	\$46,779	\$47,528	\$48,448
Year 9	\$40,389	\$41,035	\$41,856	\$42,274	\$42,951	\$43,806	**	**	**	\$47,232	\$47,988	\$48,909
Year 10	\$40,763	\$41,415	\$42,244	\$43,652	\$44,350	\$44,227	**	**	**	\$47,684	\$48,447	\$49,370

5
 6
 7 Year one of each category was adjusted/increased 2% for CPI/inflation. Years two through ten were
 8 increased by an additional 1% of the beginning amount in each category. The adjustment/increase for 2022
 9 is due to the portions of the Consumer Price Index that would more adversely impact those at the entry-level
 10 salaries. Please refer to www.bls.gov for the figures.

11
 12 ¶322.1 (3) of the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline explains *
 13 ¶327 of the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline explains **
 14 ¶330 of the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline explains ***

15
 16 **Submitted by:**
 17 Commission on Equitable Compensation
 18 Rev. Don Gotham
 19 Interim Chair