

III. ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO GENERAL CONFERENCE AND THE JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE

A. AN INCLUSIVE CHURCH

We are an inclusive church. We desire to have a delegation that will capably represent the annual conference. The delegation should be representative of the annual conference considering such factors as sex, age, race, disability, ethnic background, economic conditions and geographical locations.

B. ELECTION PROCEDURES

Clergy and lay delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be elected in a fair and open process at the session of the annual conference held not more than two years preceding the session of General Conference.

1. Special Sessions. Clergy and lay delegates elected to the preceding General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be the delegates to special sessions of the respective conferences.
2. Number of Delegates. The number of clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be that number of delegates to such conferences respectively as furnished by the secretary of the General Conference.
3. Election of General Conference and jurisdictional conference Delegates. The number of General Conference delegates authorized by the secretary of the General Conference shall be first elected, followed by balloting on the authorized number of the jurisdictional conference delegates who shall be reserves to General Conference in the order of their election. After the authorized numbers of the jurisdictional conference delegates have been elected, 10 clergy and 10 lay reserve delegates to the jurisdictional conference shall be elected on a single ballot with the 10 persons receiving the greatest number of votes in each category being elected in the order of the number of votes received.
4. Speeches/Printed Materials. No speeches may be made or printed materials distributed at the site of the Annual Conference on behalf of any nominee.
5. Nominee Participation. Nothing herein shall prevent any nominee from
 - a. appearing at the podium or floor microphone for the purpose of conducting Conference business.
 - b. fully participating in activities of the Conference including the debate over budgets or proposals pending before the Conference. This shall include the right to bring petitions or amendments to the Conference and encourage votes for or against the same.
 - c. conducting one-on-one conversations about the election of delegates to the General Conference and the jurisdictional conference including how that nominee proposes to represent the Conference at such events. Nominees are reminded to respect the need of the Conference to conduct business and are asked to take such conversations off the floor of the Conference.

C. CLERGY NOMINATIONS

1. Eligibility

- a. To be nominated. All clergy members in full connection are eligible to be nominated (*2016 Book of Discipline* ¶35), except as provided in *2016 Book of Discipline* ¶354.8.
- b. To vote
 - i. The following clergy are eligible to vote:
 - a) Active and retired members (elders and deacons)
 - b) Active and retired provisional members
 - c) Active and retired associate members
 - d) Part time and full time local pastors who
Part-time and full-time local pastors who have completed the educational requirements and have been under uninterrupted appointment for two years (*2016 Book of Discipline* ¶316.6)
 - ii. Retired local pastors (including those under appointment) are NOT eligible to vote (*2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶320.5).

2. Nomination Process.

- a. All eligible clergy have the opportunity to serve as delegates to General Conference and jurisdictional conference. Clergy persons desiring nomination/election as delegates to General and jurisdictional must follow the process

outlined below. No exceptions to the process, including deadline dates, will be granted except as mandated by changes in *The Book of Discipline* of The United Methodist Church and/or the Annual Conference in changing these rules.

Those who consent to or desire nomination are asked to commit to the following expectations:

- 1) Pray for God's guidance in decision-making;
- 2) Commit the time needed to read and study the issues;
- 3) Attend the meetings of the Virginia Conference delegations;
- 4) Attend both General Conference and jurisdictional conference.

Each clergy nomination shall be submitted on a clergy nomination form. Clergy nomination forms will be posted on the conference web site in January preceding the Annual Conference session of delegate elections. The form shall include the names one clergy who is eligible to vote who is making the nomination. Alternatively, any clergy who desires nomination must complete a clergy nomination form. All nominations shall include the nominee's name, picture not to exceed 1 1/2" by 2 1/2" (unless nominated at Clergy Session), address, phone number, e-mail address if available, church, district, and should include a personal statement no to exceed 150 words in which may be indicated the nominee's experience, qualifications, and reasons for wanting to serve. There shall be a box to be checked stating: "Nominee is aware of nomination and agrees to serve if elected.", and a line for the signature of the nominee. The completed nomination form or facsimile thereof must be returned to the Director of Connectional Ministries no later than March 1 preceding the Annual Conference session of delegate elections. The deadline is non-negotiable.

- b. Clergy Nominations from the Floor. After the convening of the Annual Conference session, prior to entering block voting, the presiding Bishop will ask for any nominations from the floor. Any nominations made from the floor must be made by eligible clergy (III.C.1.b.i) and the nominee must be present to accept or decline the nomination. Nominations from the floor shall be closed by the presiding Bishop.
- c. Clergy Nomination Review Committee. The committee shall be composed of two persons appointed by the bishop plus one clergy member of the Rules Committee designated by that committee. The Director of Clergy Excellence shall serve as an ex-officio member. The committee shall review and compile all nomination forms alphabetically according to the last name of the nominee. This clergy nomination booklet will be available on the conference web site. Printed copies will be available at cost from the office of the Director of Connectional Ministries. An alphabetical listing will be included in the clergy *Book of Reports* packet. This committee will also be responsible for reviewing and validating any nomination forms submitted at the Clergy Session of the Annual Conference.

D. LAY NOMINATIONS

1. Lay Nominations from Districts. Nominations for lay delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be made by the lay members of the district conference of each district from names submitted by the District Council on Ministries and/or from names of all persons given by any member of The United Methodist Churches of the district to the District Superintendent. These names shall be submitted by the superintendent to the District Conference. Additional nominations at the district conference may be made from the floor, provided that no nomination may be made without the agreement of the nominee to serve if elected. In the event of a tie for the final nominee(s), the nominee(s) shall be selected by lot.

Each district may nominate up to one person for each 2,000 members of The United Methodist Church or major fraction thereof in that district, based upon figures reported at the preceding annual conference. District nominees need not be from the district which nominates them.

2. Agency Nominations. The lay members of the following agencies of the annual conference may also nominate one additional lay delegate: Board of Church and Society; Commission on Disabilities; Board of Discipleship; Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy; Council on Finance and Administration; Missional Ministries Board; Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries; Board of Laity; Commission on the Status and Role of Women; United Methodist Men; United Methodist Women; Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc.; and Virginia United

Methodist Pensions, Inc. In addition to the aforementioned nominees, the Conference Council on Youth Ministries, and the Virginia United Methodist Student Movement each may nominate one delegate.

3. Church Membership. All nominees shall have been professing members of The United Methodist Church for at least two years preceding their nomination and must be members of churches in the Virginia Annual Conference and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years preceding their election. They also must be active members within The United Methodist Church at the time of holding General Conference and jurisdictional conference. The four year participation and two year membership requirements may be waived for young persons under twenty-five years of age. Such persons must be members of The United Methodist Church and active participants at the time of election.
4. Nomination Forms. All nominations shall include the nominee's name, picture not to exceed 1½" x 2½" (unless nominated at Laity Session), address, phone number, e-mail address if available, church, district, and should include a personal statement not to exceed 150 words in which the nominee may indicate his or her experience, qualifications and reasons for wanting to serve. There shall be a box to be checked stating: "Nominee is aware of nomination and agrees to serve if elected.", and a line for the signature of the nominee. The nominations shall be on a form or facsimile thereof furnished by the Director of Connectional Ministries. It is recommended that the nomination forms for persons to be voted upon by the district conference be circulated to the members of the district conference in advance of the district conference at which voting is to take place.
5. Lay Nominations from the Floor. After the convening of the Annual Conference session, prior to entering block voting, the presiding Bishop will ask for any nominations from the floor. Any nominations made from the floor must be made by lay members (III.D.3.) and the nominee must be present to accept or decline the nomination. Nominations from the floor shall be closed by the presiding Bishop.

E. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON LAY DELEGATE NOMINATIONS

1. Membership. The committee shall be composed of two persons appointed by the Bishop plus one member of the Rules Committee designated by that committee.
2. Function. Each District Superintendent shall by January 15 of the year of election submit to this committee in care of the Director of Connectional Ministries completed forms for all nominees from the district. The committee shall then forward a list of all nominees to the agencies named in ¶ III.D.2. Each agency of the annual conference shall be responsible for forwarding to the committee any completed nomination form no later than March 1. The committee shall review and compile all nomination forms alphabetically according to the last name of the nominee. This lay nomination booklet will be made available on the conference website. Printed copies will be available at cost from the office of the Director of Connectional Ministries. An alphabetical listing will be included in the *Book of Reports*. This committee will also be responsible for reviewing and validating any nomination forms submitted at the Laity Session of the Annual Conference.
3. List of Nominees. The lay nominees shall be those persons named on the nomination forms.

F. BALLOTING PROCEDURES

1. Separate Voting Areas. Following the convening of Annual Conference, clergy and laity will separate to elect General and jurisdictional delegates and alternates, allowing five (5) hours to complete the process.
2. Ballots Shall Be Counted Electronically. The Rules Committee shall determine the electronic equipment and procedures to be used and shall do so in consultation with the chief lay and clergy tellers.
3. Valid Ballots. To be valid, a ballot:
 - (a) must be cast on the ballot bearing the number designated by the presiding officer for that particular ballot; and
 - (b) must be voted for the number of delegates and/or alternates to be elected on that ballot, no more and no less.
4. Voting Area. The presiding officer shall designate the areas of the Lay and Clergy Sessions where members shall be seated during balloting. Ballots shall be cast from only those present and seated within the voting areas of the annual conference and displaying the proper credentials.
5. Ballot Reporting. After a ballot has been counted, the chief teller, either clergy or lay, shall furnish a written report to the Bishop which shall contain (a) number of ballots cast; (b) number of ballots not valid; (c) number of ballots counted; (d)

number of ballots necessary to elect; and (e) list of names of persons voted for, including the number of votes received by each, beginning with the largest number of votes.

6. Majority Required for Election. On every ballot, a majority of the valid votes cast shall be necessary for the election of a delegate, except on the ballot to elect reserve delegates to the jurisdictional conference.
7. Reading or Distributing Names. On the first ballot for General Conference, the presiding officer shall read or display all names receiving votes with the number of votes cast for each. After the first ballot, the 25 nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be read or displayed, according to the highest number of votes received. In the event of a tie between two or more nominees for the last available position on the General or jurisdictional delegation, a run-off election will be ordered by the bishop to select the person to fill that position. Only the names of those in the run-off are open for votes. The names will be read in order of their election. The person with the highest number of votes cast will be seated with the appropriate delegation.

When all General Conference delegates have been elected, the same procedure shall be followed for jurisdictional conference delegates.

8. Handling of Ballots after Counting and Recording. Upon completion of the counting and recording of a ballot, the chief teller shall seal the ballot results and deliver them to the annual conference secretary. The annual conference secretary shall retain all ballot results until the adjournment of the annual conference after which they shall be destroyed.

G. TELLERS

1. Appointment of Chief Tellers, Assistant Chief Tellers, and Tellers. The Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team shall appoint a chief teller and an assistant chief teller for the clergy tellers and a chief teller and an assistant chief teller for the lay tellers. The chief tellers shall not be eligible to serve in the year of the next election of delegates to General Conference and jurisdictional conference. The Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team shall additionally appoint four (4) clergy and four (4) lay members of the annual conference from each district to form a pool of tellers from which as many teams shall be formed as the chief tellers deem advisable. One member of each team shall be designated as the captain for that team.
2. Expenses for Balloting. All expenses incident to the balloting for and election of delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference shall be borne by the annual conference.

H. EXPENSES OF CLERGY AND LAY ALTERNATES

The expenses of two clergy and two lay alternates to General Conference and to the jurisdictional conference shall be borne by the annual conference. Such expense allowances shall not exceed the expense allowances, per diem and travel, as are paid to the regular delegates.

I. DELEGATES UNDER THE AGE OF 18

When a General Conference or jurisdictional conference delegate will be under the age of 18 at the time of General Conference and/or jurisdictional conference, the Virginia Conference Child Protection Policy will be observed for this person. The leader of the General Conference Delegation will be responsible for implementation of the Child Protection Policy.