

# VAUMC GC DELEGATION REGIONALIZATION WEBINAR

# WELCOME!

You are in a webinar- you can see and hear the presenters, but we can not see or hear you.

**Q&A:**  
Ask questions for the panel



Audio Settings ^      Chat      Q&A      Leave Meeting

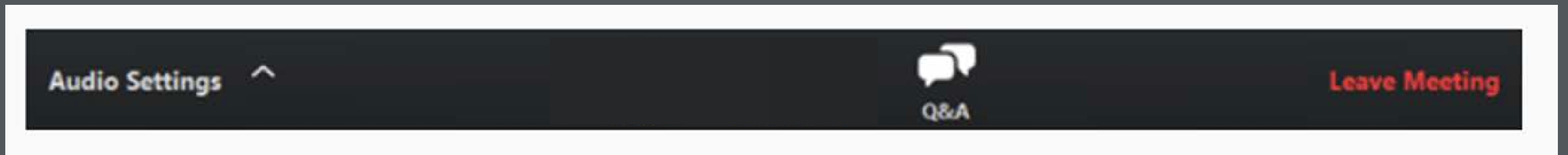
VAUMC GC DELEGATION

# REGIONALIZATION WEBINAR

MAY 29, 2024

# How Do I Ask Questions or Chat During the Live Webinars?

**Q&A:**  
Ask questions  
for the panel



These are part of the Zoom toolbar and may be hidden by "..."

# GOALS

**01** **WHY**  
Why are we gathered this evening?

**02** **CONTEXT**  
Why change is needed.

**03** **WHAT**  
What is Regionalization?

**04** **CAN & CAN NOT**  
What Regionalization Can and Can Not do.

**05** **WHAT'S NEXT?**  
Next steps for Virginia.

**Q&A**





Regionalization is the **most important structural change** to our denomination in a **generation.**



**WHY**

I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, **2** with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, **3** making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: **4** there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, **5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism, **6** one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:1-6

New Revised Standard Version - Updated Edition  
(NRSVUE)



WHY

19 For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might gain all the more. 20 To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to gain Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might gain those under the law. 21 To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not outside God's law but am within Christ's law) so that I might gain those outside the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, so that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. 23 I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I might become a partner in it.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

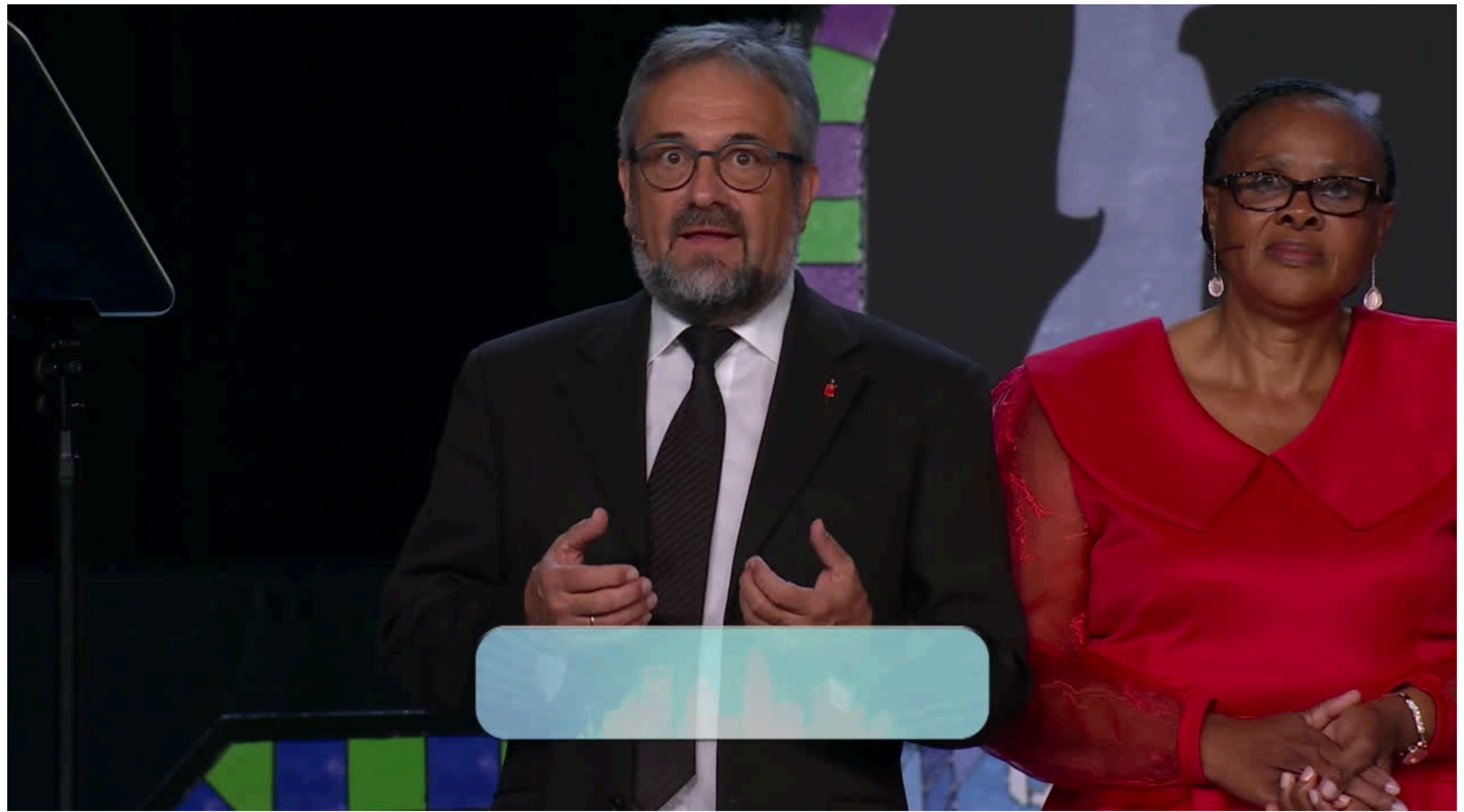


WHY

The United Methodist Church General Conference  
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA



**WHY**

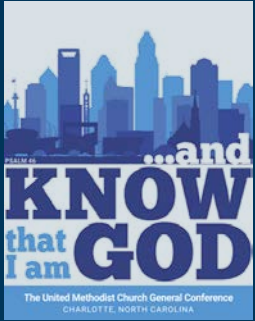


**FROM THE REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR CENTRAL CONFERENCE MATTERS**





# WHY WE NEED REGIONALIZATION



**CONTEXT**

# A QUICK WORD ABOUT UMC STRUCTURE

## FIRST: A QUICK LOOK AT OUR STRUCTURE

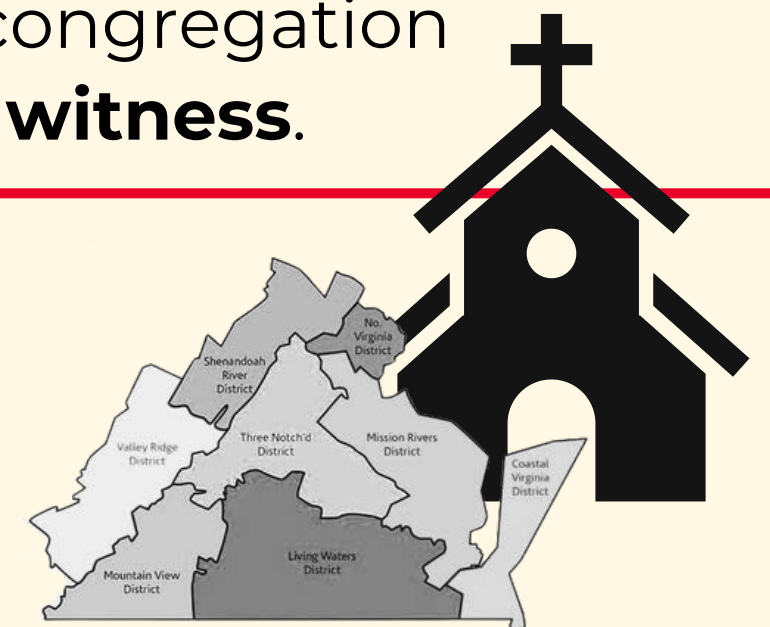


### IT STARTS WITH YOU!

You are a committed leader within your local church faithfully participating in the life and ministries of your local congregation through your **prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.**

### YOUR CHURCH IS PART OF A DISTRICT

The Virginia Conference has **eight districts** -- Coastal Virginia, Living Waters, Mission Rivers, Mountain View, Northern Virginia, Shenandoah River, Three Notch'd, and Valley Ridge.



### YOUR DISTRICT IS PART OF AN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Your church is one of approximately 875 churches in the **Virginia Annual Conference**. The United States has 54 annual conferences, supervised by bishops in 46 episcopal areas. There are 75 annual conferences in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines, which are supervised by 20 bishops.



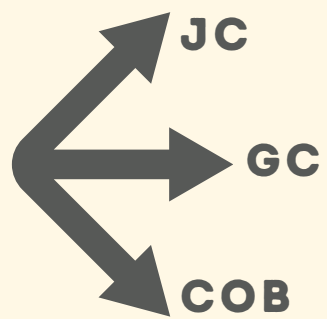


## YOUR CONFERENCE IS PART OF A JURISDICTION

There are five US Jurisdictions -- North Central, Northeastern, South Central, Southeastern, and Western. Virginia is part of the **Southeastern Jurisdiction** or SEJ.

## WE ARE A WORLDWIDE CHURCH

Outside the US, Annual Conferences are organized into seven **Central Conferences**. Together we all make up the United Methodist Church.

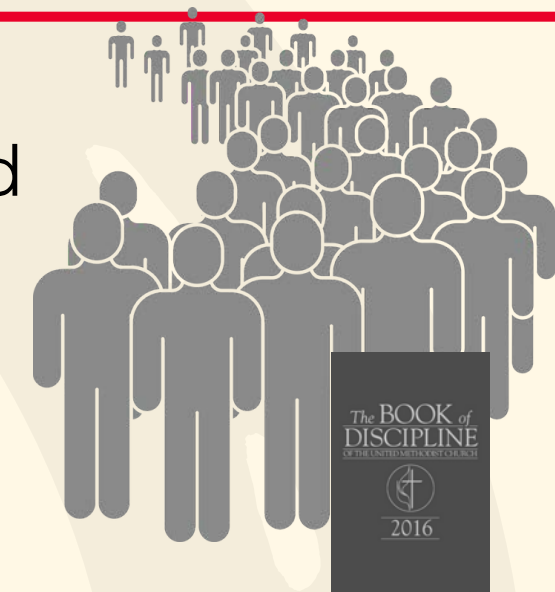


## WE ARE GOVERNED BY THREE BODIES

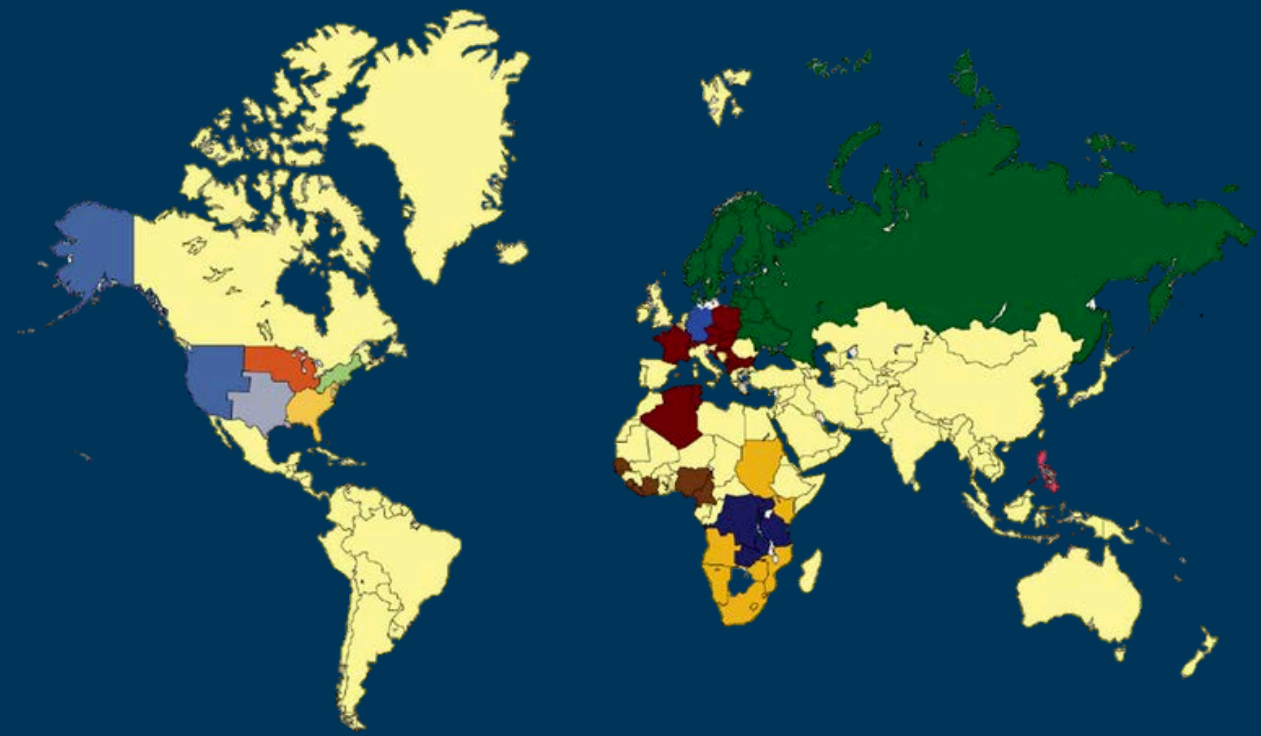
The United Methodist Church does not have a central headquarters or a single executive leader. Duties are divided among bodies that include the **Judicial Council**, the **General Conference**, and the **Council of Bishops**.

## GENERAL CONFERENCE SETS POLICY

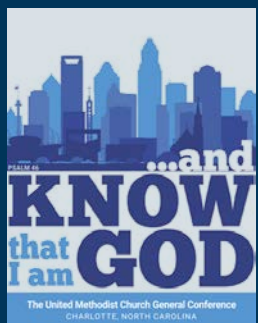
The General Conference meets every four years. Legislation is examined and voted upon by **persons elected** from Annual Conferences from **across the denomination**. The Council of Bishops presides over General Conference and the Judicial Council reviews passed legislation to determine its constitutionality, legality, or meaning.



# A WORDLWIDE CHURCH



- Shift in Representation
- 7% to 44 % outside the US
- Being a Worldwide church is who we are!

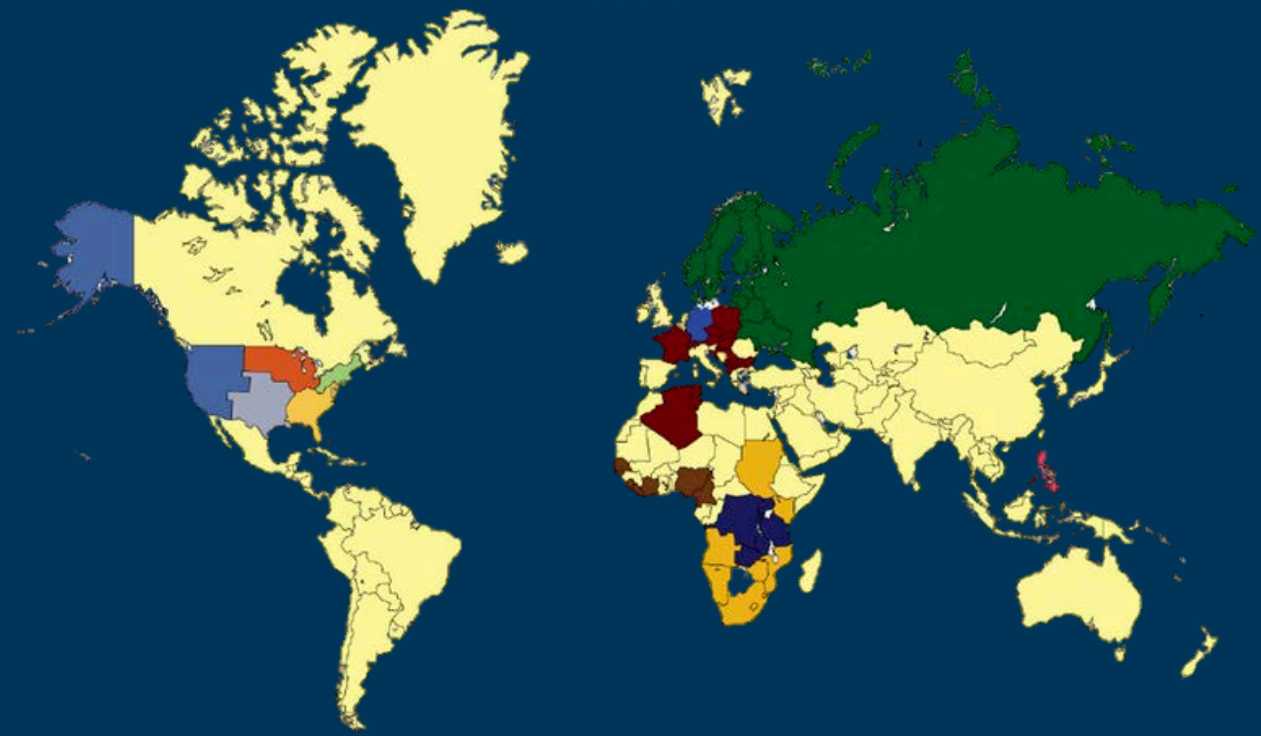


CONTEXT



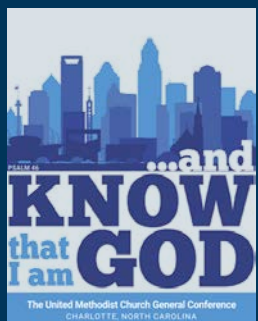


# A WORDLWIDE CHURCH



Following the 2019 General Conference, **Central Conference delegates** came together to imagine an equitable structure of global regionalism for the UMC.

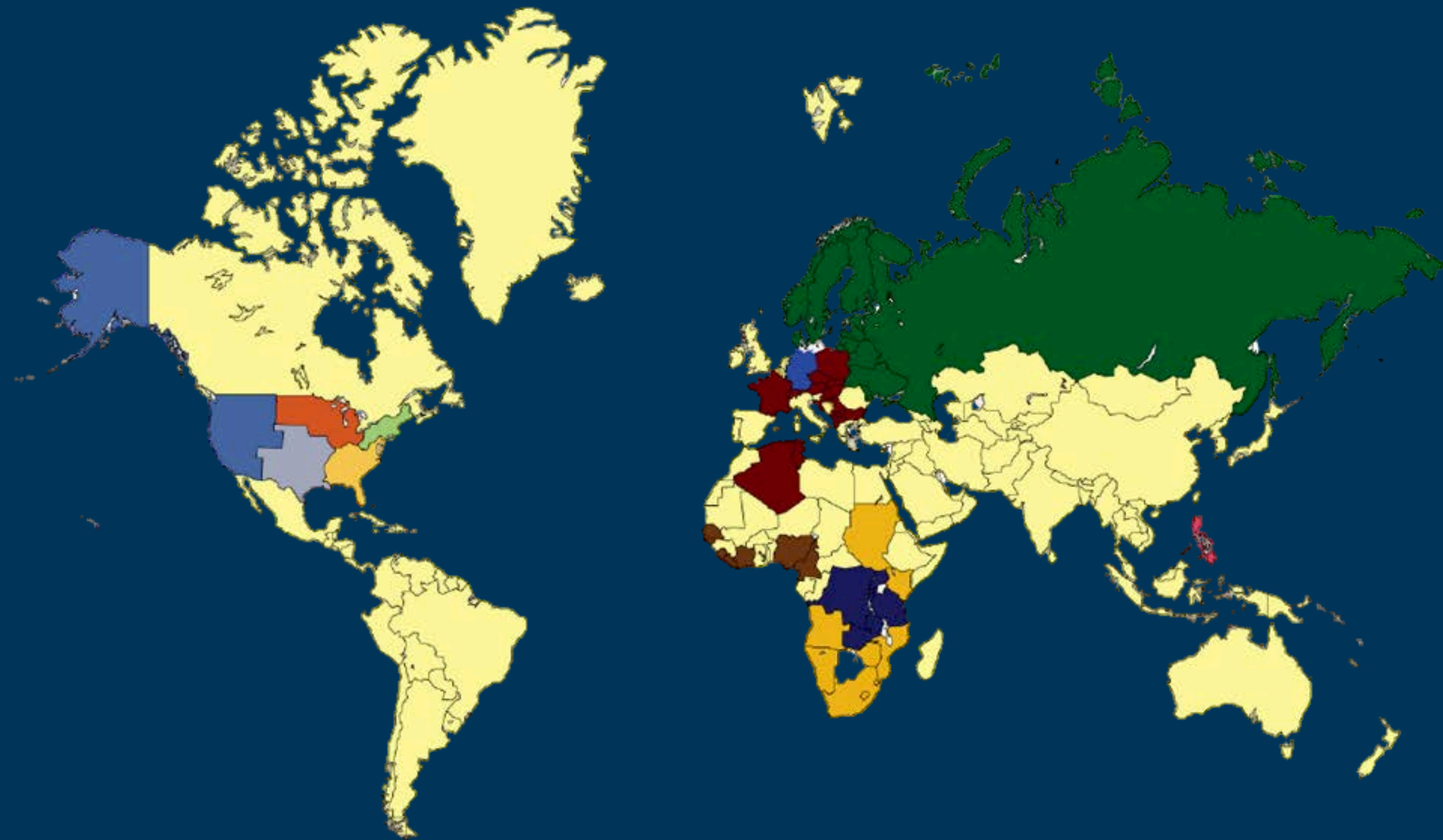
The goal was always to **remain connected and united in mission.**



CONTEXT



# A WORDLWIDE CHURCH



Our global nature is one of our great **strengths!**



# WHAT IS REGIONALIZATION?

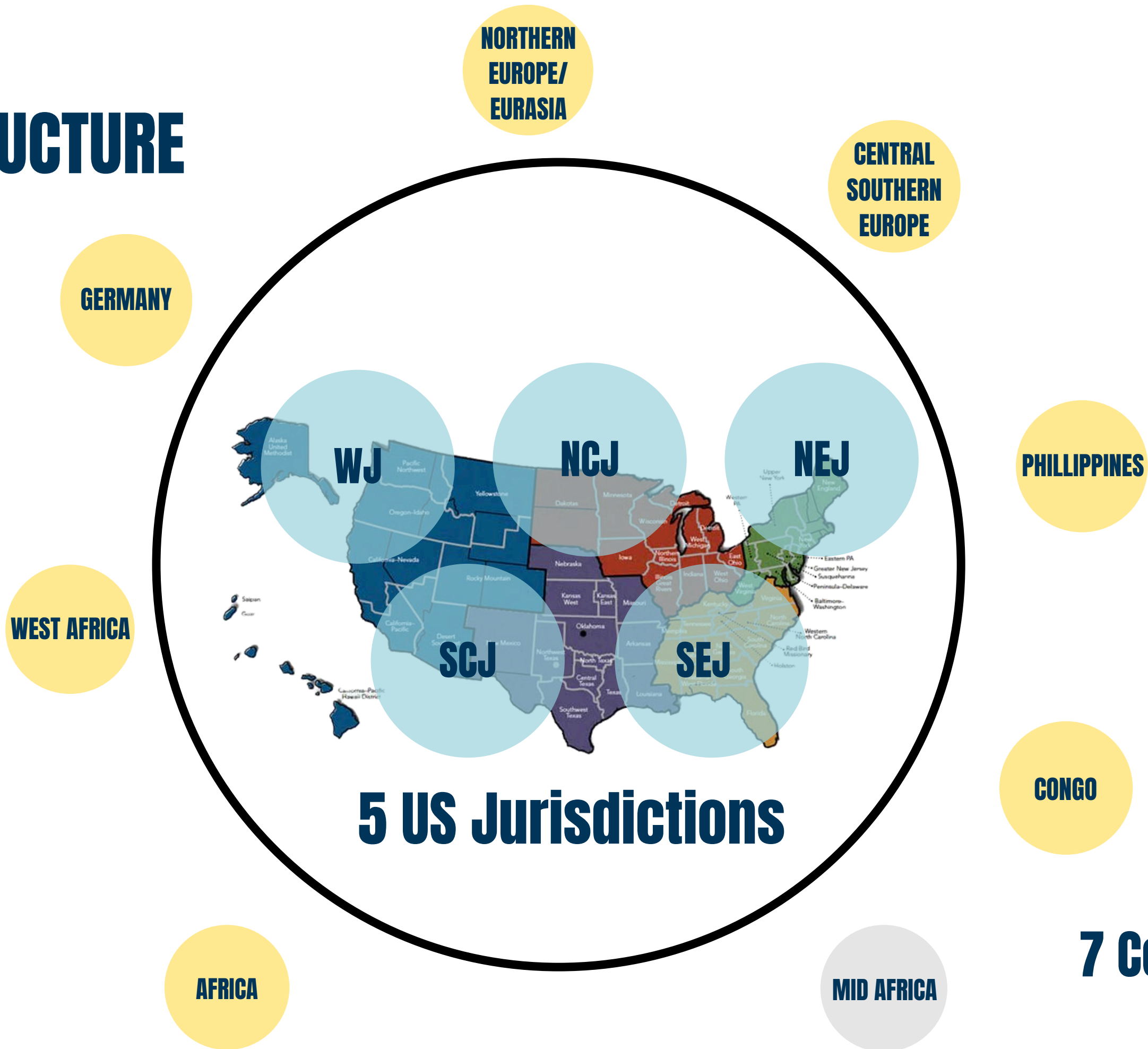


# WHAT IS REGIONALIZATION?

Regionalization is a plan to **restructure** the denomination.

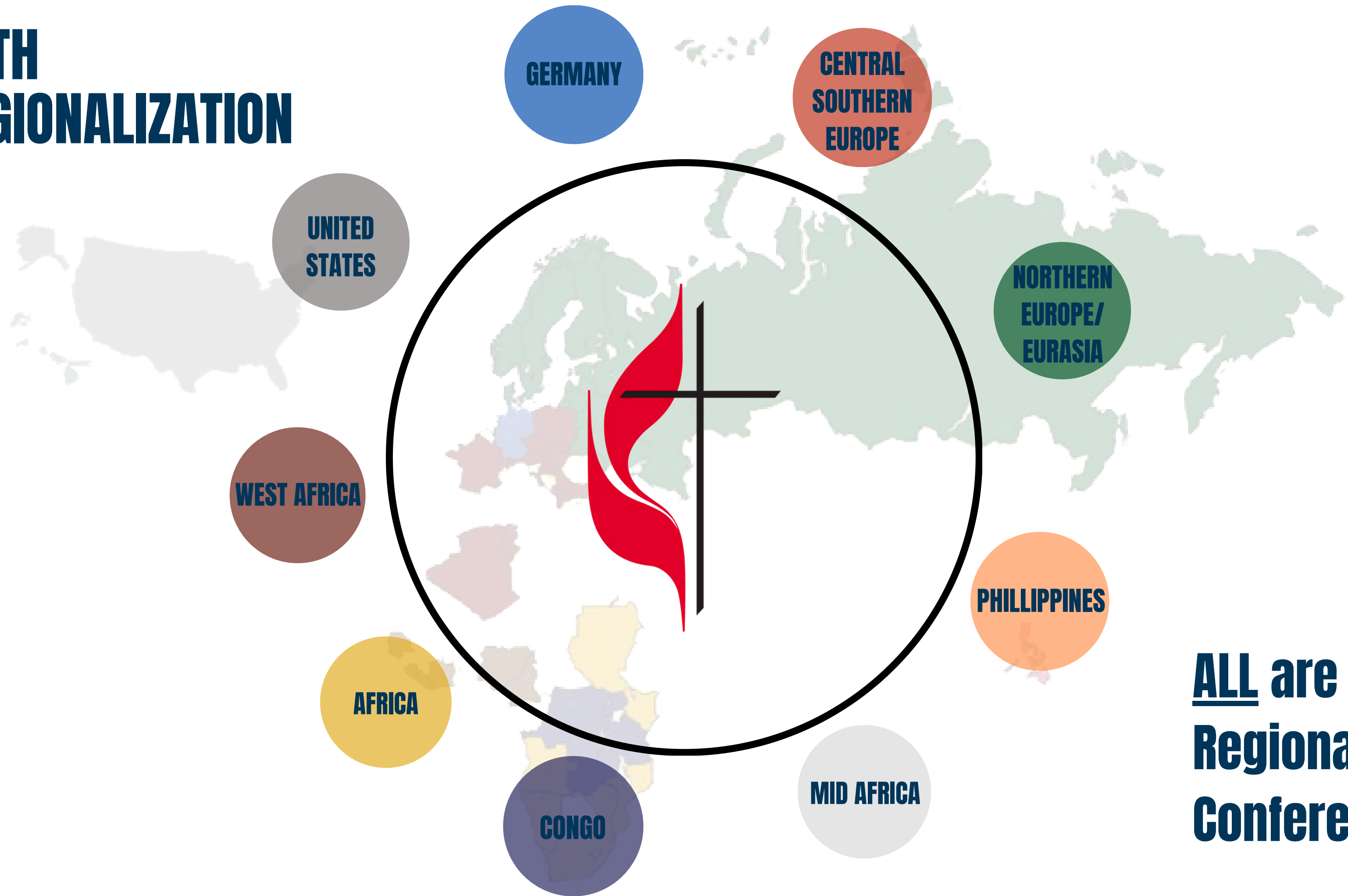


# CURRENT UMC STRUCTURE



**7 Central Conferences**  
(Now 8)

# WITH REGIONALIZATION



**ALL are  
Regional  
Conferences**

# 8 REGIONALIZATION PETITIONS

1. Constitutional Changes
2. Changes in the Book of Discipline necessitated by constitutional changes
3. Enabling Legislation to update ¶2201 on the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters
4. Enabling Legislation to replace “central conference” with “regional conference” throughout the Discipline after ratification of constitutional amendments
5. Creates a new ¶507 to establish an interim US Regional Committee.
6. Enables the creation of an interim US Regional Committee
7. Create a Plan for Organization of a US Regional Conference
8. Update and Perfect Regional Conference Structure

# WHEN?

Because this requires a constitutional Amendment, it **would not go into effect UNLESS** it is **ratified by Annual Conferences**

Requires **2/3 aggregate vote** of all voting Annual Conference members across the Connection.





# IMPLICATIONS

The United States Regional Committee would be assigned “all petitions pertaining to the operation, governance, witness and ministry of The United Methodist Church in the United States and which are adaptable by the central conferences.”

## *Some Examples:*

- US Pensions/Retirement
- US Healthcare Plan
- US Episcopal Elections
- Protection for inclusion within the US

# RECENTERING

Rather than centering the UMC on the United States, we recenter on **JESUS CHRIST** and are able to remain connected worldwide for mission and ministry.



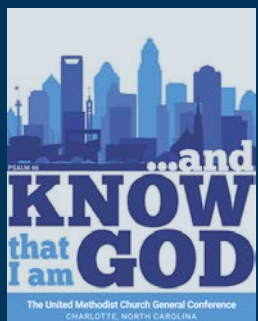


# WHAT CAN REGIONALIZATION DO AND NOT DO?



# WHAT WILL IT DO?

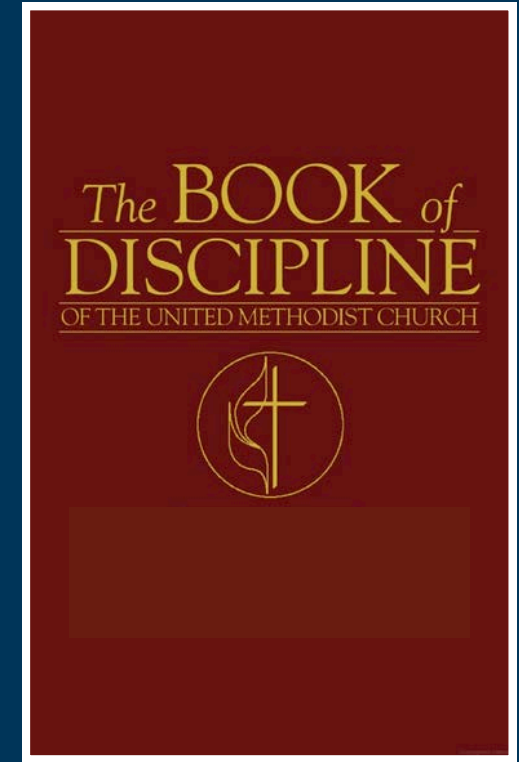
Regional Conferences would be allowed to **do the same thing** that Central Conferences have already been allowed to do for many decades



CAN & CAN NOT



WILL **NOT** CHANGE



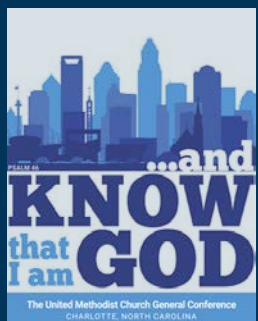
Chapter 1: **The Constitution**

Chapter 2: **The General Book of Discipline**

Chapter 3: **Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task**

Chapter 4: **The Ministry of All Christians**

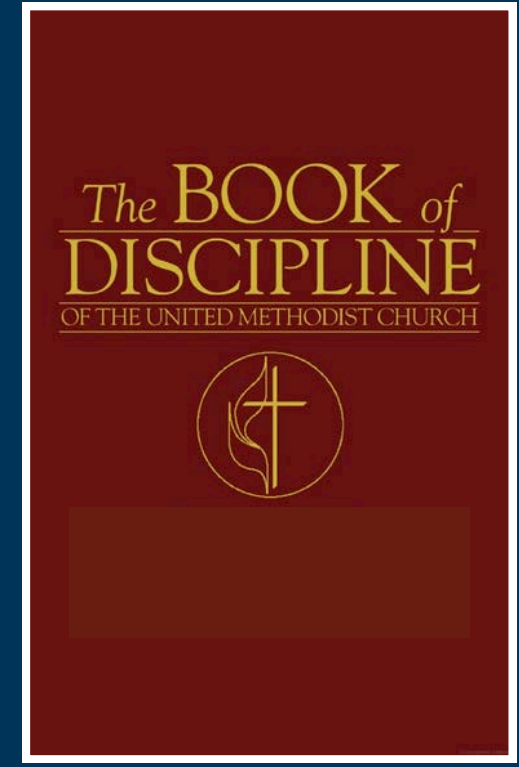
Chapter 5: **Social Principles**



CAN & CAN NOT



**CAN CHANGE**



## Chapter 6: **Organization and Administration**

*where contextual variations are most impactful and important to advance the mission of Christ and the Church in that particular region of the world.*



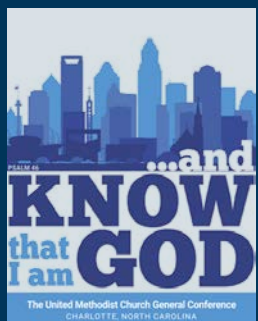
**CAN & CAN NOT**



# CAN CHANGE

## Constitutional Amendment to ¶31, Article IV, number 5

a) To establish and publish a regional Discipline with legislation and provisions pertaining to the regional, annual, district, and charge conferences within its boundaries, including qualifications and educational requirements of clergy and specialized lay ministries, and forms of organization according to the laws of the country or countries.

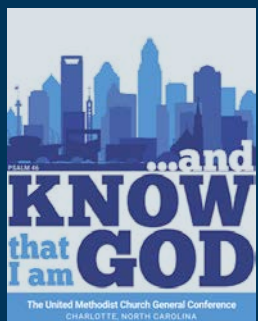


CAN & CAN NOT

**CAN CHANGE**

## **Constitutional Amendment to ¶31, Article IV, number 5**

b) To set standards of character and other qualifications for admissions of lay members



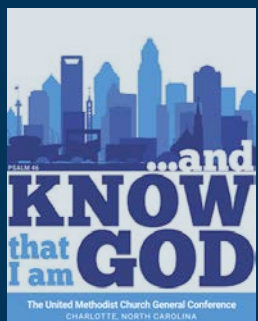
**CAN & CAN NOT**



# CAN CHANGE

## Constitutional Amendment to ¶31, Article IV, number 5

c) To acknowledge annual conferences as the basic bodies of the church (paragraph 33) voting on all matters relating to the character and conference relations of its clergy members, and therefore considering the requirements set forth in a regional Discipline regarding specialized lay ministry and license, ordination, or conference membership, as minimum requirements.



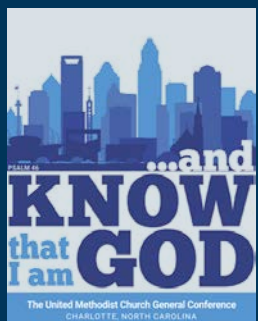
CAN & CAN NOT



**CAN CHANGE**

## **Constitutional Amendment to ¶31, Article IV, number 5**

d) To establish and publish a regional hymnal and ritual of the Church, including ecclesial acts of marriage and burial, subject to the limitations of the first and second Restrictive Rules, but authorizing to interpret Article XXIII of the Articles of Religion so as to recognize the government of the country or countries.

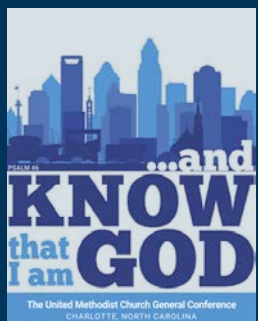


**CAN & CAN NOT**

**CAN CHANGE**

## **Constitutional Amendment to ¶31, Article IV, number 5**

e) To allow the annual conferences to adopt structures adequate to their mission while upholding mandated structures.

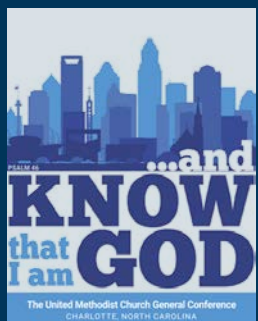


**CAN & CAN NOT**

**CAN CHANGE**

## **Constitutional Amendment to ¶31, Article IV, number 6**

To appoint a judicial court to determine legal questions arising from the rules, regulations, and such revised, adapted, or new sections of the regional Discipline enacted by the regional conference.



**CAN & CAN NOT**



# CAN CHANGE

## **Constitutional Amendment to ¶31, Article IV, number 7**

To adopt rules or procedure governing the investigation and trial of its clergy, including bishops, and lay members of the Church and to provide the necessary means and methods of implementing the said rules; provided, however, that the ordained ministers shall not be deprived of the right of trial by a clergy committee, and lay members of the Church of the right of trial by a duly constituted committee of lay members; and to make changes in the chargeable offenses and their penalties.

A regional conference or a jurisdiction, if a regional conference has jurisdictions, shall appoint a committee on appeals to hear and determine the appeal of a clergy or lay member of the respective conference from the decision of a committee on trial.



# WHAT'S NEXT?





# NEXT STEPS

Because Regionalization requires a constitutional Amendment, this amendment must be ratified at **all Annual Conferences** in the UMC.



WHAT'S NEXT



# NEXT STEPS

Because Annual Conferences meet at different times during the year, the ratification process (voting) will go on from **summer 2024 through November 2025.**

**Virginia** will vote on regionalization in **June of 2025.**

The outcome will not be announced until **spring of 2026.**



WHAT'S NEXT

## **IF** RATTIFIED ...

- A US regional conference will be created.
- All Central Conferences will be changed to Regional Conferences
- A study undertaken to update and perfect new regional conference structures to ensure equity
- A team will look at the General Book of Discipline
- General Conference **would be more efficient and focus on truly global issues** (theology, global mission collaboration and shared witness) and US issues will be dealt with at US regional conferences.



**WHAT'S NEXT**

# ANNUAL CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES



**Wednesday, June 19, 2:00-4:00 PM**

Open Q&A

**Thursday, June 20, 5:30-6:15 PM**

Regionalization presentation and Q&A

**Friday, June 21, 7:30-8:15 AM**

Regionalization presentation and Q&A



# QUESTIONS?

# FEEDBACK QUESTIONS





**FIND MORE INFORMATION**

**[vaumc.org/regionalization](http://vaumc.org/regionalization)**



THANK YOU!