

**X. CONFERENCE RULES AND POLICIES****STANDING RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE**

As Approved by The Virginia Annual Conference at Its 2018 Session

The annual conference shall elect a Rules Committee as allowed by ¶604 of the *Discipline* and as set forth in ¶V.B.18 of the Standing Rules. The Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies shall be those published in the *Journal of The Virginia Annual Conference United Methodist Church* of the preceding annual conference and shall be published in the *Book of Reports* of each annual conference.

**I. THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE****A. THE PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

The purpose of the Virginia Annual Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.

**B. MEMBERSHIP**

1. **Clergy Membership.** The clergy membership of the annual conference shall consist of deacons and elders in full connection, provisional members, associate members, affiliate members, and local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment to a pastoral charge.
2. **Campus Ministries.** Campus ministers, chaplains and Wesley Foundation directors shall be included in the annual conference composition. In districts where United Methodist laypersons serve as campus ministers/directors of Wesley Foundations, they shall be added as district-at-large lay members to the annual conference. In districts where United Methodist clergy who are members of the annual conference serve as chaplains, campus ministers, or directors of Wesley Foundations, the laypersons elected as their balancing counterpart shall be elected from and by either that campus ministry board of directors or the students from that ministry/foundation and their expenses paid by the district. Special consideration shall be given to the inclusion of United Methodist young adults who are active participants in campus ministry.
3. **Lay Membership.** The lay membership of the annual conference shall consist of the following (or designated alternate), if lay persons:
  - a. a professing member elected by each charge; except that each charge served by more than one clergy member under appointment (including deacons in full connection for whom this is their primary appointment ) shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are clergy members under appointment.
  - b. diaconal ministers;
  - c. the active deaconesses and home missionaries under episcopal appointment within the bounds of the annual conference;
  - d. the conference president of United Methodist Women;
  - e. the conference president of United Methodist Men;
  - f. the conference lay leader;
  - g. district lay leaders;
  - h. the president of the conference young adult organization;
  - i. a member of the conference youth organization;
  - j. the chair of the annual conference college student organization;
  - k. the conference secretary of global ministries;
  - l. the conference director of lay servant ministries;
  - m. one young person between the ages of 12 and 18 and one young person between the ages of 18 and 30 from each district, to be selected as set forth in *2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶ 602.4.

And by annual conference formula to equalize the number of lay and clergy membership of the annual conference (¶ 32, *2016 Book of Discipline*) the following, if lay persons:

- n. one additional young person between the ages of 12 and 18 and one additional young person between the ages of 18 and 30 from each district, to be selected by the District Council on Ministries or equivalent body.
- o. the conference Treasurer;
- p. the Chancellor(s) of the annual conference;
- q. the Director of Connectional Ministries
- r. lay members of general boards, councils and commissions, and lay members who serve on agencies related to the general church and are mandated by the *Discipline* because of their office to serve on related annual conference agencies, who are members of such as of August 31 of the previous year;
- s. district presidents of United Methodist Men;
- t. district presidents of United Methodist Women;
- u. the president or chairperson of the following annual conference agencies: Commission on Archives and History; Board of Church and Society; Church Development Team; Commission on Disabilities; Board of Discipleship; Commission on Equitable Compensation; Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy; Council on Finance and Administration; Missional Ministries Board; Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries; Board of Ordained Ministry; Rules Committee; Site Selection Committee; Commission on Status and Role of Women; Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc.; Trustees of the Virginia Annual Conference, Inc.; and Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc. and Virginia United Methodist Foundation.
- v. Additional lay members to be elected by the lay members of the district conference of each district in such numbers as to provide that the total number of lay members from that district shall bear the same ratio to the total lay membership of the annual conference as the church membership of that district bears to the total church membership of the annual conference. Each district conference shall also elect alternates to those elected under this paragraph in number to equal at least one-third of the numbers provided under this subparagraph. The computations that form the basis for the determination of the additional lay member-

ship to be elected by each district hereunder shall be based on the various membership categories as of the adjournment of the preceding annual conference. In making these computations, a lay person shall not be counted in more than one membership position. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall furnish to the Bishop by September 1 of each year the totals of each category of members together with the number of additional lay members to be elected by each district.

- w. Conference scouting coordinator.
  - x. All lay members of the annual conference shall conform to the requirements for membership of the *2016 Book of Discipline* in ¶ 602.4.
4. Members of Next Succeeding Annual Conference. By the adoption of Paragraphs 3. d-u, all lay persons holding the positions enumerated in those subparagraphs are elected as lay members of the next succeeding annual conference. In the event of a change in the persons holding a position in ¶ I.C.3. between sessions of the annual conference, the person holding the position at the time of the next succeeding annual conference shall be the member of the annual conference.
5. Expenses. Unless otherwise covered by a local charge, expenses of attending annual conference shall be born as follows:
- a. By the districts:
    - i. two young persons between the ages of 12 and 18;
    - ii. two young persons between the ages of 18 and 30;
    - iii. the district lay leaders;
    - iv. the district president of the United Methodist Men;
    - v. the district president of the United Methodist Women;
    - vi. additional district members at large;
  - b. By the annual conference:
    - i. the Director of Connectional Ministries
    - ii. the Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries;
    - iii. the president of the conference young adult organization;
    - iv. a member of the conference youth organization;
    - v. the conference Treasurer;
    - vi. the conference Chancellor(s);
    - vii. lay members of general boards, councils and commissions, and lay members who serve on agencies related to the general church and are mandated by the *Discipline* because of their office to serve on related annual conference agencies, who are members of such as of August 31 of the previous year;
    - viii. the chair of the annual conference college student organization;
    - ix. the conference scouting coordinator
  - c. By annual conference boards or agencies:
    - i. the Conference Lay Leader
    - ii. the conference president of the United Methodist Men;
    - iii. the conference president of the United Methodist Women;
    - iv. the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries
    - v. the president or chairperson, of the following annual conference agencies: Commission on Archives and History; Board of Church and Society; Church Development Team; Commission on Disabilities; Board of Discipleship, Commission on Equitable Compensation; Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy; Council on Finance and Administration; United Methodist Foundation; Missional Ministries Board; Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries; Board of Ordained Ministry; Rules Committee; Site Selection Committee; Commission on Status and Role of Women; Virginia United Methodist Pensions; Inc., Trustees of the Virginia Annual Conference, Inc.; and Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc.
6. Right to Floor and Right to Vote. With the exception of provisional members, associate members, and local pastors serving full-time and part-time appointments, those members of the conference listed in ¶¶ I.C.1., 2., and 3. shall be full members of the conference with the right to the floor and the right to vote. Provisional members, associate members, and local pastors serving full-time and part-time appointments have the right to the floor and the right to vote on all matters except the following:
- a. Constitutional amendments.
  - b. Matters of ordination, character and conference relations of clergy. These shall be the sole responsibility of clergy members in full connection.

For the election of delegates to the General and the Jurisdictional conference 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 have completed the educational requirements and have been under uninterrupted appointment for two years (*2016 Book of Discipline* ¶316.6).
  - e. Retired local pastors (including those under appointment) are NOT eligible to vote for the election of delegates (*2016 Book of Discipline* ¶ 320.5).
7. Roll of Conference. The roll of the conference shall be the official registration signed by the members of the conference.
8. Privilege of Floor Without Vote. The following shall be seated in the annual conference and shall be given the privilege of the floor without vote: official representatives from other denominations, especially from member churches of Churches Uniting In Christ, invited by the annual conference; missionaries regularly assigned by the General Board of Global Ministries and serving within the

bounds of the annual conference; lay missionaries regularly appointed by the General Board of Global Ministries in nations other than the United States and certified lay missionaries from nations other than the United States serving within the bounds of the annual conference (quoting 2016 Book of Discipline ¶ 602.9).

#### C. ANNUAL CONFERENCE OFFICIALS

1. The Presiding Officer. The resident Bishop of the conference shall preside at all sessions of the conference but shall have the privilege of appointing a presiding officer to preside in his or her stead in the event of illness or temporary absence from the annual conference floor.
2. Annual Conference Secretary. The secretary of the annual conference shall be elected quadrennially by the annual conference upon nominations arising from the floor at annual conference following each regular General Conference of The United Methodist Church. In the event a vacancy occurs between sessions of the annual conference, the Bishop, after consultation with the District Superintendents, shall appoint a person to act until the next session.
3. Assistant Secretaries. The secretary shall annually nominate a sufficient number of assistant secretaries who shall be elected by the annual conference to handle properly the work of the annual conference.
4. Treasurer. The annual conference Treasurer shall be nominated by the Council on Finance and Administration. He or she shall be elected by the annual conference at the first session of the annual conference following the regular General Conference. He or she shall be elected for the quadrennium or until his or her successor has been elected and qualifies. If a vacancy should occur during the quadrennium, the Council on Finance and Administration shall fill the vacancy until the next session of the annual conference.
5. Statistician. The annual conference statistician shall be elected by the annual conference on nomination by the Cabinet at the annual conference following each regular General Conference of The United Methodist Church. In the event a vacancy occurs between sessions of the annual conference, the Bishop, after consultation with the District Superintendents, shall appoint a person to act until the next session of the annual conference.
6. Assistant Statisticians. The annual conference statistician shall annually nominate a sufficient number of assistant statisticians who shall be elected by the annual conference for the annual conference year.
7. Editor of the Annual Conference Journal. The annual conference secretary shall nominate annually the editor of the conference *Journal*, who shall be elected by the annual conference for the next calendar year. He or she shall be responsible for editing and printing the *Journal of the Virginia Annual Conference* and shall be amenable to the conference secretary.
8. Conference Parliamentarian. The Bishop may appoint a conference parliamentarian whose duty shall be to advise and counsel concerning rules of order and procedure.

#### D. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF BOARDS, COUNCILS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

1. The Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team: There shall be a Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team. The team shall meet at least quarterly. The Director of Connectional Ministries and the Conference Lay Leader shall serve as co-chairs. The Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team shall consist of 18 members in addition to the co-chairs. Two members (one clergy, one lay) shall be appointed by the Bishop to ensure appropriate age, ethnic and gender representation on the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team. The Bishop will make replacement appointments in a manner that continues to ensure appropriate age, ethnic and gender representation and in a manner that maintains the clergy/laity balance on the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team. Of the remaining 16 members, eight shall be clergy and eight shall be lay. Each district of the Virginia Annual Conference shall be represented. Representatives of the Commission on the Status and Role of Women, the Commission on Disabilities, and the Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy shall monitor and have voice at these meetings.

All persons shall serve terms of four years, and no person shall serve for more than four consecutive years. As terms of district representatives expire, each District Nominations Facilitation Committee will name one replacement individual to serve on the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team, clergy to replace lay, lay to replace clergy. In the event that a member moves from the district, resigns, or dies during his/her term, a replacement shall be selected in the manner which was applicable to the departing member, with the replacement only serving until the end of the original term.

Each District Nominations Facilitation Committee shall designate one of its members as an alternate to its District Representative on the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team.

2. District Nominations Facilitation Committee. There shall be on each district a Nominations Facilitation Committee composed of the District Superintendent as chair; the district lay leader; president of United Methodist Men; president of United Methodist Women; a representative of United Methodist Youth; a college chaplain or a campus minister (applies only to districts with Wesley Foundation or ecumenical campus ministry programs), the district representative to the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team, plus one to three persons (lay and clergy) elected by the district council on ministries. The committee shall meet on the call of the chair at least twice a year between annual conference and March 1. The committee shall develop and maintain a talent bank of lay and clergy persons from the district who could be qualified nominees for the various boards and agencies of the annual conference. The committee shall prepare a profile on each person nominated and upon having a person nominated to a board or agency of the conference, will provide a copy of that profile, including address and phone number, conference boards or agencies the individual is already serving, and the person's willingness to serve, to the co-chairs of the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team.
3. Information to Be Furnished to Each District Nominations Facilitation Committee. Each board, council, commission and committee of the annual conference shall furnish to the co-chairs of the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team on a timely basis for the use of the District Nominations Facilitation Committees:
  - a. A summary of its responsibilities and the specific division/committee for which a vacancy exists;
  - b. A list of the gifts and talents desired;
  - c. Length of service expected;

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- d. Demographic information about its current makeup (e.g., number of men, women, ethnic representation, district representation, etc.); and
- e. Schedule of times and locations of its meetings during the year.

It may also suggest names and profiles to the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team through its co-chairs.

4. When Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team Should Make Nominations. The Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team shall annually or quadrennially, as set forth by Disciplinary provision or Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies, nominate the membership of the boards, councils, commissions, and committees of the annual conference. Nominees for boards and other agencies shall be published in the *Book of Reports*.
5. Removal Due to Absences. Any member of any board, council, commission or committee who is absent from two meetings of such board, council, commission or committee without excuse, or from three consecutive agency meetings for any reason, shall automatically cease to be a member of such board, council, commission or committee. The secretary of each board, council, commission or committee shall notify the co-chairs of the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team of vacancies. Any vacancy shall be filled by action of the board, council, commission or committee until the next annual conference session, at which time the annual conference shall fill the vacancy.
6. Request at Annual Charge Conferences for Names to be Given to District Nominations Facilitation Committee. At each annual charge conference the elder presiding at the charge conference shall ask if the Lay Leadership Committee has any names to recommend for conference boards, councils, commissions or committees. Such names shall be given to the district Nominations Facilitation Committee.
7. Multicultural Inclusiveness. The Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team shall strive to insure multicultural inclusiveness.
8. Normal Term Of Service Is Four Years. Unless otherwise specified in these rules or in the *Book of Discipline*, a person elected to a board, council, commission or committee of the annual conference is elected for a four-year term of service and is eligible for re-election to an additional four-year term. However, if one is first elected to fill an unexpired term of two years or less, that person is eligible for re-election to two full terms. A person completing two consecutive full terms is eligible for re-election to that agency after an interim of one year. In the case of a board or agency with an eight-year term, members elected to fill unexpired terms of three years or less shall be eligible for re-election to one full term of eight years. Program boards and agencies other than the Board of Ordained Ministry may co-opt specific persons for specific projects for short periods of time as consultants, without vote. Any combination of continuous service as either a regular or co-opted member shall count on the eight-year time limit for consecutive service. The term of office of members of conference boards and agencies shall begin with the adjournment of the Annual Conference at which said members are elected and shall extend until their successors are elected.
9. Members of general boards or agencies shall be members ex-officio of the corresponding conference board or agency.
10. Nomination or Election to Only One Board, Council, Commission, or Standing Committee with Limited Exceptions. No person is eligible for nomination, election, or interim appointment to more than one board, council, commission, or standing committee, except where permitted by the *Discipline* and/or conference structure.
11. District Superintendent Not Eligible to be Chairperson or President of Board, Council, Commission, or Standing Committee. No District Superintendent shall be eligible to serve as a chairperson or president of any board, council, commission, or committee of the annual conference. The Bishop may appoint a representative of the Cabinet to any board, council, commission, or committee which is not program-related of which a member of the Cabinet is not already an elected member. The appointment of District Superintendents to boards, councils, commissions, or committees which are program related shall be made annually.
12. Officers of Quadrennially Elected Boards, Councils, Commissions or Committees. Officers of boards, councils, commissions, and committees whose members are required to be elected quadrennially shall be elected by the representative agency at the session of the annual conference at which new members are elected or within ninety days after adjournment. Nominations shall come from a nominating committee appointed by the outgoing president of the agency and/or from the floor. The organizational or first meeting of each agency shall be convened by a person designated by the Bishop.
13. Officers of Other Boards, Councils, Commissions and Committees. Officers of other boards, councils, commissions and committees shall be elected by the representative agency at the agency's last regular meeting prior to each annual conference. Nominations shall come from a nominating committee appointed by the outgoing president of the agency and/or from the floor.
14. Tellers. For those sessions of the annual conference where there is no election of delegates to General Conference and the jurisdictional conference, the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team shall appoint a chief teller, who shall be ineligible to serve again for a quadrennium. It shall additionally appoint a team of tellers composed of two persons, one clergy and one lay, from each district. Each time a count vote is called for in the annual conference session, the chief teller shall have the tellers ready to count the vote, having previously trained them to accurately and efficiently perform their duties.

## II. REPORTS, PRESENTATIONS, PETITIONS, PROPOSALS AND CONSENT AGENDA

### A. REPORTS

1. Submission of Annual Reports and Mailing of Book of Reports. Agencies shall submit annual reports to the designated person before the date set annually by the Common Table for Church Vitality. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall mail the *Book of Reports* to each clergy and lay member of annual conference at least 30 days before the opening session of annual conference, printing and mailing at conference expense.
2. Reporting At Annual Conference. For reports printed in the *Book of Reports*, verbal introductions shall not exceed five minutes, and there shall be no further reading of recommendations or resolutions, unless requested for clarification or requested by a majority vote of the annual conference. The presiding Bishop shall amend the Annual Conference schedule as needed.
3. Amendments to be Submitted in Writing. Persons proposing amendments to any report must submit them in writing to the secretary upon

presentation to the annual conference.

4. Submission of New Reports, Changes, or Additions to Printed Report. Persons proposing new reports, changes or additions to the printed report of an agency in the *Book of Reports* must submit them in writing for delivery to members of the annual conference at the opening session, but not to be considered by the annual conference before the morning session of the second day of annual conference.
5. Presiding Officer of Agency giving Report has Privilege of Floor, without Vote, for that Report. When the annual conference has before it the report of any agency, or a matter concerning any agency, the presiding officer of that group, if not a member of the conference, shall have the privilege of the floor, without vote, for that report.

#### B. PRESENTATIONS

Requests for inclusion of presentations for the annual conference agenda shall be submitted to the Director of Connectional Ministries by the due date for the publication of the Book of Reports. The author or originating agency must be identified if other than the submitter(s) of the proposal.”

#### C. PETITIONS

An area designated by the annual conference planning committee shall be determined for receiving signatures for petitions.

#### D. PROPOSALS

1. Proposals Requiring Publication of Materials. Proposed annual conference action that includes publication or dissemination of information in the *Virginia Advocate* or other media shall be referred to the Print Media Committee of Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc., for its consideration and report on the proposed action, including the financial consequences, prior to conference action. The committee may act through its chairperson, the *Advocate* editor, or other representatives to make its report and recommendation.
2. Proposals Requiring Funding. Proposals or amendments which may require expenditure of funds, which have not been considered by the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA), shall be referred to CFA for its consideration and recommendation prior to final annual conference action.
3. Proposals Requiring Addition to Agenda. During the first business session of annual conference, the agenda shall include time to introduce items in addition to the printed agenda. Any such items not referred to conference agencies under the preceding paragraphs shall be referred to the Rules Committee for its consideration and recommendation prior to adjournment of annual conference.

#### E. CONSENT AGENDA

Agenda items and reports not requiring action by the Annual Conference other than a vote to receive said items for publication in the Journal shall be placed on a Consent Agenda. For any item or report to be eligible for placement on the Consent Agenda, it must have been distributed in the pre-Conference materials. Determination of items to be placed on the Consent Agenda shall be made annually by the Bishop in consultation with the Consent Agenda Committee. This committee shall be composed of the Conference Secretary, the Conference Lay Leader, the Chair of the Conference Rules Committee, and the Director of Connectional Ministries. An individual item may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of no less than 30 members of the annual conference. The process for making that request will be determined by the Consent Agenda Committee, and the deadline for such requests will not be prior to ten minutes after the call to order of the annual conference session. The Consent Agenda will be made available electronically one week prior to the annual conference. When an individual item has been removed from the Consent Agenda, it shall be placed into the regular agenda.

### 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.

## X. CONFERENCE RULES AND POLICIES

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.

## IV. NOMINATIONS FOR EPISCOPAL ELECTION

At the annual conference immediately preceding the jurisdictional conference, nominations for the office of Bishop may be made by submitting the name of an elder and a biographical sketch of not more than 100 words to the secretary of the conference signed by not fewer than 50 members of the annual conference. To be eligible for nomination the person must not have attained his or her 68th birthday prior to the first day of the month in which the jurisdictional conference is held. Nominations shall cease at the close of the afternoon session of the first day of the annual conference.

The conference secretary shall cause copies of each sketch to be prepared and distributed to the members of the annual conference. Ballots shall be prepared containing the name of each nominee and, beside each name, a square followed by the word "yes." The ballots shall be distributed to the members of the annual conference immediately before they are to be cast. A member of the annual conference may vote for one or more nominees, but not more than the number of episcopal vacancies to be filled, or may choose not to vote for any of the nominees. To be nominated to the jurisdictional conference, a nominee must receive an affirmative vote of not less than 60 percent of the total ballots cast.

## V. ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM BOARDS AND AGENCIES

### A. ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM BOARDS AND AGENCIES

The following are defined as program boards and agencies: The Board of Church and Society, the Church Development Team, the Board of Discipleship, the Missional Ministries Board, the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries, and the Board of Laity. Each board and agency shall meet at least annually.

1. Membership. All program board and agency members shall be elected for a four-year term by the annual conference. So far as possible, board membership shall be composed of an equal number of clergy and laity. No elected member may serve more than eight consecutive years except as authorized by the *Discipline* or in ¶ I.E.8 of the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies. The bishop shall annually appoint for one year terms at least one District Superintendent to each board, agency or commission. Except for the Board of Ordained Ministry, the presiding bishop and the Director of Connectional Ministries are members of all boards, agencies and commissions with vote unless otherwise provided for by the *Book of Discipline*.
2. Organization. The boards shall organize in the several divisions or equivalent structure listed below to carry out their respective functions. Each member of a board shall serve on one division or equivalent structure. There shall be an executive committee of each board whose duties and responsibilities shall be determined by the board. A board may develop such additional structure, including the election of division members-at-large, as it deems necessary to discharge its assigned responsibilities, provided, however, that where additional funding is required for such structure, prior approval of the Common Table for Church Vitality shall be obtained by the board. Division members-at-large are not members of the board.
3. Function. The conference boards will provide consultative services and resources to the local church, the District Councils on Ministries, the annual conference and the Common Table for Church Vitality. Each board will make program recommendations to the Common Table for Church Vitality, will be responsible for the essential functions of the area of concern assigned by the Common Table for Church Vitality, or by the *Book of Discipline*, and will be related to the objectives and scope of work set forth by its General Board. Each board is amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality.
4. Responsibilities.
  - a. Church and Society. The Board of Church and Society, in cooperation with the General Board of Church and Society and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall develop programs on Christian social concern within the bounds of the annual conference. To discharge its responsibilities it shall divide its membership into committees, which so far as practical shall be patterned after the divisions of the General Board of Church and Society. The total membership shall be 20 (10 lay and 10 clergy).
  - b. Church Development Team. There shall be a Church Development Team dedicated to working on strategies for and implementation of church development and new faith communities in the annual conference. This team/board will consist of a minimum of 12 and up to 16 persons: six nominated by the bishop and Cabinet, six nominated by the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team, and up to four additional persons who may be co-opted by the team for expertise and diversity. The membership of this team will be placed in four classes to ensure continuity. The team is amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality.
  - c. Discipleship. The Board of Discipleship in cooperation with the General Board of Discipleship and the Common Table for Church Vitality shall create partnerships by providing a network of experience, knowledge and coaching through intentional connection to enhance or create effective disciple making processes. These partnerships are created by: (1) coaching at local levels and pulling in identified district and conference resources as needed, (2) training at district or regional levels, (3) drawing on best practices gathered locally, jurisdictionally, nationally and globally, (4) connecting mentor/resource churches with those who request assistance and information, (5) organizing in regional teams, and (6) raising vision, visibility and possibility during Annual Conference sessions and inviting people to connect with a congregational coach. The Board of Discipleship shall consist



of a directing board to set the vision for disciple-making ministries in the annual conference and to support research on best practices, gathered and distributed by a Conference Awareness Team at events and through all other forms of communication.

The Directing Board will consist of the following eight (8) members: three officers (chair, vice-chair, and secretary) to be elected by the Annual Conference, the chair of the Disciple Resource Team, and four (4) Regional Network Leads. In addition, the Bishops' Foundation will be represented by one person with voice but no vote. The Directing Board will select individuals to serve as leads of the Regional Network Teams. The Regional Network Leads will be ex-officio members of the Directing Board with voice and vote.

The Disciple Resource Team will consist of eight (8) members, Four classes of two, one laity and one clergy per class. Members of the Disciple Resource Team will be nominated from the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team (CLDDT) and elected by the Annual Conference.

Members of the Regional Network Teams will be selected by the Regional Network Leads, in consultation with the Directing Board, based upon best practices research.

Each age-level council will meet at least annually as the conference council for the respective ministry areas (with additional members as required by conference Rules and the *Book of Discipline*, if any) for: (a) sharing of the best practices in their regions, (b) training which will enhance their service to the faith communities within each region, (c) coordinating of conference programs and initiatives as appropriate, and (d) serving as resources to the Regional Network Teams.

The Youth Council and Young Adult Council (ages 18 – 35) will consist of members as mandated in the appropriate sections of *The Book of Discipline*.

The Youth Council shall have one youth representative (grade 7 – 12) elected by each District Youth Council or equivalent. Six adults shall be elected to the Youth Council: three adults elected by the Youth Council or equivalent and three elected by the Annual Conference.

The Young Adult Council shall have three additional young adult members at-large elected by the Annual Conference.

The Older Adult Council shall have six members elected by the Annual Conference.

- d. Missional Ministries. The Missional Ministries Board in cooperation with the General Board of Global Ministries and the Common Table for Church Vitality shall develop programs to assist districts and local churches to carry out all phases of the work of the church in mission and of church extension within the annual conference. The Conference Director of Justice and Missional Excellence shall serve as the Conference Secretary of Global Ministries (CSGM), fulfilling the responsibilities outlined in ¶ 633.3 of the *2016 Book of Discipline*. To discharge its responsibilities it shall divide into two (2) mission teams: (1) Missional Discipleship and Engagement and (2) Missional Connection. The position of Conference Coordinator of Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (CUIC) shall be appointed by the Bishop and shall be an ex-officio member of the Mission Connection Team of the Conference Missional Ministries Board, as outlined in ¶ 633.2 of the *2016 Book of Discipline*. The membership of the board shall be 20, with 6 or 4 persons (one-half lay and one-half clergy) elected each year to replace outgoing classes.
- e. Higher Education and Campus Ministries. The Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries in cooperation with the General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall develop programs to provide for higher education and ministry objectives as set forth in ¶ 1405 of the *2016 Book of Discipline*, and to perform the responsibilities in regard to education and professional campus ministries as set forth in ¶ 634 of the *2016 Book of Discipline*. Membership: With an effort to maintain a balance of clergy and laity, the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries shall have 12 Conference elected members (placed in four classes): a current campus minister, a current Campus Ministry Local Board Chairperson, a current local church pastor with passion for campus ministry, a current United Methodist College or University President, a young adult/student, a member with expertise in property management, and six general members (with a preference for expertise in executive leadership, finance, communication, and marketing). The member who has expertise in the area of property management shall also serve as the chairperson of the Conference Board of Property Managers of the Wesley Foundation, Inc. Ex officio members shall be: the Director of Connectional Ministries, a Liaison District Superintendent (liaison between the BHECM and the Cabinet), an additional District Superintendent, the Conference Treasurer, and any Virginia Conference member to the General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries. The related conference staff person (the Director of Ministries with Young People) and the Director of the Association of Educational Institutions (AEI) will serve as members with voice but no vote. The term for chairperson shall be four years and terms for members shall also be four years and follow section I.E.8 of the Conference Rules and Policies. Nominations and election of the chairperson shall follow section I.E.11 of the Conference Rules and Policies. The Executive Committee of the BHECM shall consist of the chairperson, the Liaison District Superintendent, the current campus minister, the member with expertise in property management and three general members.
- Organization: The BHECM will meet a minimum of every other month. The Executive Committee will meet as needed. The BHECM will also be responsible for a minimum of one annual meeting for the following: Effectiveness Training Forums for Local Campus Ministry Boards, Effectiveness Training Forums for Campus Ministers/Chaplains, and Effectiveness Discussion Forums for District Superintendents. The incorporated entities of the board are the Wesley Foundation, Inc., and Francis Asbury Loan Fund, Inc. The conference board of property managers is a sub-group of the Wesley Foundation, Inc. The Executive Committee of the Board shall function as the board of directors of both the Wesley Foundation, Inc., and Francis Asbury Loan Fund, Inc.
- f. Laity. The Board of Laity shall act as an advocate for the Virginia Annual Conference laity in all forums of the annual conference. The purpose of the Board of Laity is to create a culture of call by engaging, equipping, and empowering people so that they might effectively partner with each other and their pastors to live out God's call as they lead the church in transforming the world as disciples of Jesus Christ. Membership of the Board of Laity shall be composed of the conference lay leader, three associate

## X. CONFERENCE RULES AND POLICIES

conference lay leaders, the Conference Director(s) of Lay Servant Ministries, the presidents of the conference organizations of United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women or their designees, Young People's Representative selected by the Youth or Young Adult Council, sixteen (16) district lay leaders, one District Superintendent appointed by the Bishop, and the Bishop. Three clergy who model excellence in the lay-clergy partnership for ministry will be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve as ex-officio members. To discharge its responsibilities, the Board of Laity shall divide its membership into three work area teams: (1) Engaging (Holistic Stewardship); (2) Equipping (Leadership Excellence); and (3) Empowering (Shared Ministry). The Board of Laity shall nominate to the annual conference for election a layperson to be the conference lay leader for the ensuing four years. Any person elected to the office of conference lay leader shall not be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms, or a total of eight (8) years.

### B. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES

The following agencies having administrative responsibilities are grouped together under the general title "Administration" with duties and responsibilities as indicated.

1. Archives and History, Commission on. There shall be a Commission on Archives and History and a Virginia Conference Historical Society. The duties and responsibilities of the commission shall be as set forth in the *2016 Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 641). Members of the annual conference shall be members of the Virginia Conference Historical Society, which will elect 48 members to the commission who will also serve as the directors of the Virginia Conference Historical Society. The officers of the commission and the society shall be the same.
2. Bishops' Foundation. There shall be a Bishops' Foundation whose purpose is to provide training for leadership development of both lay and clergypersons of the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church in the areas of evangelism and preaching in the Wesleyan spirit, and whose Board of Directors shall consist of nine (9) directors nominated by the Cabinet of the Virginia Conference and elected by the Annual Conference: five (5) clergy members and four (4) lay members serving for staggered terms of three (3) years after the initial term of 1, 2, and 3 years. The director of Connectional Ministries of the Virginia Conference or his/her designee will serve as an *ex officio* member of the Board of Directors.
3. Communications, Virginia United Methodist, Inc. There shall be a Board of Communications which is to serve all of the agencies of the annual conference in the area of communication. It shall be administratively related to and amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality. The board and/or its subunits may be incorporated.
  - a. Function The mission of Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc. is to assist faith communities in communications and related technologies, empowering their mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
  - b. Membership Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc., shall consist of 24 persons, 14 of whom (half lay and half clergy) shall be elected by the annual conference. The 14 members thus elected and ex-officio members shall elect 10 additional members-at-large selected with regard to professional expertise, nonprofessional objectivity, and media representation. The ex-officio members shall be the Director of Connectional Ministries, a Cabinet representative, director of Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc., the Conference Information Systems Director, and any member of United Methodist Communications, the General Board of Publications, and any other general board or agency whose purpose or function is included with the purposes and functions of this organization, or their successors, who is a member of a local charge in the Virginia Annual Conference or a clergy member of the Virginia Annual Conference. There shall be a president, vice president and secretary.
  - c. Organization There shall be the following committees:
    - i. Executive Committee shall consist of the elected officers of the corporation, the conference director of Communications and three additional members of the board. The three non-officer members of the Executive Committee shall be elected quadrennially by the Board of Directors and shall hold office until their successors are elected and qualify. Vacancies may be filled at any meeting of the Board of Directors. All non-officer members of the Executive Committee shall be chosen from among the directors. The Executive Committee shall include both laypersons and clergypersons. The president shall act as chair of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall also serve as the committee on Nominations, with the corporation vice president overseeing the business of nominations. The Executive Committee shall review board membership annually and recommend changes in membership to the board.
    - ii. Project Committees. As needs arise, project committees may be appointed by the president to function on behalf of specific projects or activities of the corporation. Any two (2) members of a project committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the committee's business. The president shall be an ex-officio of all such project committees. It is strongly encouraged that all board members serve on a project.
  - d. Finance
    - i. The Director of Communications for the Virginia Conference shall be designated as the person who can authorize expenditures on behalf of the corporation under the direction of the Board of Directors.
    - ii. Budget. The Director of Communications for the Virginia Conference, working closely with the board president, committee chairs, and communications staff will annually develop the various communication budgets and submit them to the board for approval and will regularly review expenditures to insure compliance with the adopted budgets. The Board of Directors, prior to the budget deadline of the annual conference Connectional Ministries office each year, shall recommend an income and expense budget covering all activities for the next fiscal year, including capital improvements or expenditures.
4. Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team (CLDDT). (See ¶ I.D.1. for composition and function of the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team.)
5. Disabilities, Commission on. The commission shall consist of 18 members, half clergy and half lay. Membership shall include persons with physical disabilities and persons with intellectual disabilities. The Bishop may appoint to the commission a District Superintendent to serve as Cabinet representative with voice but not vote.

6. Episcopacy, Committee on the. There shall be a Committee on the Episcopacy, the membership and duties of which shall be as prescribed in ¶ 637 of the *2016 Book of Discipline*.
7. Equitable Compensation, Commission on. The Commission on Equitable Compensation shall be composed of an equal number of lay and clergy persons including at least one lay and one clergy from churches of fewer than 200 members who are nominated by the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team and elected by the annual conference. In addition, one District Superintendent named by the Cabinet shall be a member. It shall perform the duties assigned to it by the *2016 Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 625). It shall receive all requests from or on behalf of all pastoral charges for aid to be used solely for clergy support. It shall administer the Equitable Compensation Fund and may employ money from other agencies, including those which may be granted by the Missional Ministries Board, as appropriate in each case, to meet these requests.
8. Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy, Commission on. There shall be a Virginia Conference Commission on Minority Concerns and Advocacy amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality. The commission will provide for the functions as outlined in the current *Book of Discipline* for the Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns and Commission on Religion and Race. The basic membership of the commission shall consist of 10 clergy, 10 laypersons, and five members at-large elected upon nomination of the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team. A minimum of two members shall be youth and young adults between the ages of 12 - 35. The commission will be constituted so that two-thirds of the membership be representative of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. The district coordinators for Religion and Race shall be ex-officio members of the commission with both voice and vote. The presidents or chairs of conference caucuses, fellowships, or associations for racial and ethnic constituencies shall be ex-officio members of the commission with voice but not vote. The bishop may appoint to the commission a district superintendent to serve as Cabinet representative with voice but not vote.
9. Finance and Administration, Conference Council on. There shall be a Conference Council on Finance and Administration elected and organized with responsibilities as set forth in the *2016 Book of Discipline* (See ¶¶ 611-619), provided that membership of the council shall be composed of five clergy, five lay women, and five lay men nominated by the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team.
10. Foundation, United Methodist. There shall be a United Methodist Foundation organized with responsibilities as set forth in the *2016 Book of Discipline* ¶2513 and pursuant to the charter heretofore approved by the Annual Conference in 2016; fourteen (14) of the twenty-three (23) trustees shall be elected by the Annual Conference.
11. Incapacity, Joint Committee on. There shall be a Joint Committee on Incapacity consisting of two representatives from the Board of Ordained Ministry, two representatives from the Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc., one representative from the Cabinet and one representative of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Their duties shall be as prescribed by the *2016 Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 652).
12. Investigation, Committee on. There shall be a Committee on Investigation nominated, elected, and with duties as set forth in the *2016 Book of Discipline* (See ¶ 2703.2).
13. Minutes, Committee on. There shall be a Committee on Minutes consisting of seven members nominated by the Cabinet for a term of eight years, provided that the terms of four members shall expire at the end of one quadrennium and terms of the other three shall expire at the end of the next quadrennium. At least three members shall be lay persons and at least three shall be clergy. The chair shall be designated by the Cabinet. The committee shall review the daily minutes of the annual conference proceedings and report at the next session. Within three weeks of the close of the annual conference session, the committee will meet with the conference secretary to review and correct the minutes of proceedings before submitting the same for printing in the conference *Journal*.
14. Ordained Ministry. The Board of Ordained Ministry in cooperation with the General Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries and the Common Table for Church Vitality, shall develop programs to assist districts and local churches in preparing and aiding persons to fulfill their ministry in Christ as this has been historically understood by United Methodism. The Board of Ordained Ministry shall perform all the duties and functions as set forth in the Book of Discipline and shall be directly amenable to the annual conference. The Board of Ordained Ministry shall have sixty-seven (67) persons nominated by the bishop (*2012 Book of Discipline* ¶ 635.1) and elected by the annual conference at the beginning of each quadrennium. The annual conference registrar and at least one District Superintendent appointed by the bishop shall also serve on the Board of Ordained Ministry. At least one person from each district shall be included on the board. If during the course of the quadrennium a district should lose its representation on the board, an additional person shall be elected to the board to ensure representation from each district.
15. Pensions and Related Benefits, Virginia United Methodist, Inc. This agency, which is incorporated as Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc., shall be composed of twenty-four (24) members in two classes serving eight-year terms. It is recommended that all classes consist of one-third laywomen, one-third laymen, and one-third clergy. Any clergy member of the conference or lay member of a church within the conference who is a member of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits shall also be a member of the agency (*2016 Book of Discipline* ¶639.2a) If no District Superintendent is a member of this agency the Bishop may name one to represent the Cabinet. He or she shall have voice but not vote.  
This agency shall perform the duties set forth in the *2016 Book of Discipline* (see ¶ 639). In addition, it shall administer the conference program for participant supplemental benefits including the various insurance programs, shall study on a continuing basis the problems of participant disability, making recommendations relative to these problems as needed, and shall provide for a continuing pastoral ministry to disabled participants.
16. Preachers' Relief Society. This is an incorporated body with invested trust funds, the income from which is used from time to time for the relief of needy members of the clergy and their families.
17. Professional Association of United Methodist Secretaries. There shall be a Chapter of the Professional Association of United Methodist Secretaries (VAPAUMCS), which is to provide church secretaries and other administrative professionals a supportive base for unity and fellowship so as to promote individual growth, professional development, continuing education, and spiritual enrichment.

## X. CONFERENCE RULES AND POLICIES

There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of a President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer and the Standing Committees Chairs. There shall be standing committees: Communications composed of five members; Finance composed of four members (the President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President and Treasurer); and Nominating composed of six members in classes of two for three-year terms.

18. Rules Committee. There shall be a Rules Committee consisting of nine members elected by the annual conference on nomination of the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team or from the floor for a term of eight years. The terms of four members shall expire at the end of one quadrennium and the terms of the other five members shall expire at the end of the next quadrennium. Five members of the committee shall be lay and four members shall be clergy. The chancellor(s) of the annual conference shall be *ex officio* members of the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee shall review the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies between sessions of the annual conference, and make its recommendations to the annual conference. Proposed amendments to the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies and any other matters of parliamentary order or procedure in the business of the annual conference shall be referred to the Rules Committee.
19. Site Selection, Committee on. There shall be a Committee on Site Selection consisting of four members, one-half lay and one-half clergy, elected on nomination of the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team for a term of eight years. The committee shall be divided into two classes with the terms of one class to expire at the end of one quadrennium and the terms of the other class to expire at the end of the next quadrennium. This committee shall make arrangements for the meeting of the annual conference and shall recommend a location for the meeting of the annual conference a minimum of five years in advance.
20. Status and Role of Women in the Church, Commission on the. There shall be a Virginia Annual Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women in The United Methodist Church amenable to the Common Table for Church Vitality. The membership shall consist of one representative from each district plus six persons at large elected by the annual conference. In addition, the conference United Methodist Women shall name one member. The Bishop may appoint to the commission a District Superintendent to serve as Cabinet representative with voice but not vote. The majority of the commission, including both lay and clergy, shall be women. The chairperson shall be a woman.
21. Trustees, Board of. There shall be a Board of Trustees consisting of 12 members, elected by the annual conference, organized and with responsibilities as set forth in the *2016 Book of Discipline* (§§ 2512-2517).

### C. TASK FORCES

A task force may be established to accomplish a specific objective. If it is organized by direction of the annual conference, the authorizing legislation shall contain a termination date for the task force. Such task force desiring continuation beyond its termination date shall seek and receive their established termination dates (June or December). Task forces should not as a general rule exist beyond a four-year term. Task forces may request funding for conference projects, but no task force shall disburse funds unless so directed by its parent board or requested to do so by the Common Table for Church Vitality and approved by the Council on Finance and Administration in its report to annual conference. A conference-organized task force continuing beyond its first year shall annually request, in its report to annual conference, funding to cover operational costs in the succeeding year.

### D. CHANGING STRUCTURE OF PROGRAM BOARD OR AGENCY

Any proposal to the annual conference to amend or change the structure of any program board or agency at the division level or above may originate (1) upon recommendation of the board or agency itself and shall be submitted to the Common Table for Church Vitality for its recommendation; (2) upon recommendation of the Common Table for Church Vitality, provided such proposal shall have been submitted to the board itself for its recommendation; or (3) on petition of a member or members of the annual conference if such a petition has been previously submitted to the Common Table for Church Vitality and the board or agency for their recommendations, or if not previously so submitted in time for consideration by these organizations, such petition shall be referred to the Common Table for Church Vitality and the board or agency for their recommendations prior to action by the annual conference. Internal change below the division level shall be the responsibility of each board.

## VI. THE DISTRICT CONFERENCE

### A. DISTRICT CONFERENCE SHALL MEET AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR

Each district within the Virginia Conference shall hold a session of the district conference at least once during the annual conference year (in accordance with the *2016 Book of Discipline*, §658).

### B. AGENDA

The district superintendent, in consultation with the district lay leader, shall set the agenda for the district conference. The agenda shall include a report from the district committee on ordained ministry.

Members of the district conference shall elect the district lay leader (§660.2) for a term of not less than four years and not more than six years. The district conference shall also elect the committee on the district superintendency (§669.1,2), the district trustees (§2518.2) and such other officers as it deems appropriate. The district committee on ordained ministry (§666.1) and the district board of church location and building (§2519) are approved or elected by the annual conference.

### C. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of each district conference shall be composed of the following: all ordained and commissioned clergy, licensed local pastors, lay supply pastors, certified lay ministers, diaconal ministers, and deaconesses and home missionaries related to that district; a church lay leader, chairperson of the church council\*, church school superintendent, president of the United Methodist Women, and

president of the chartered United Methodist Men from each local church in the district; the district steward from each charge; the lay member of the annual conference from each charge; and three members at large, one of whom shall be a youth, elected by each charge conference;.

District officers who are members of the district conference include\*: the chairperson of the district Council on Ministries\*, the district trustees, the district treasurer, the district lay leader and associate lay leaders, the president of the district United Methodist Women, the president of the district United Methodist Men, a representative of the district youth council\*, the president of the district United Methodist Young Adults\*, the district coordinators of children, youth, young adult, adult, and family ministries, other district coordinators and directors, five youth members elected by the district youth council and five young adult members\* elected by the District Council on Ministries\*. Special attention shall be given to inclusiveness. \*Designates or equivalent body

#### D. ELECTION OF DISTRICT LAY MEMBERS AT LARGE OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

District members at large of the annual conference shall be elected by the lay members of the district conference. Nominations may be made in whatever manner the district determines, but provision shall always be made for nomination from the floor. Districts are encouraged to include members-at-large from non-chartered faith communities being served by clergy with voting rights at Annual Conference, provided that they meet the provisions of *2016 Book of Discipline* ¶602.4. Election shall be by written ballot, and those nominees receiving the most votes shall be the members at large, and the rest shall be alternates in order of the votes received up to the number of members at large and alternates allotted to each district by the annual conference.

#### E. RECORD OF DISTRICT CONFERENCE

The secretary of the district conference shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings and send a copy to the secretary of the annual conference within 30 days following the district conference.

### VII. RULES OF ORDER AND PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

#### A. RULES THAT APPLY WHEN THE CHAIRPERSON STANDS

When the chairperson stands and calls the conference to order, no member shall speak, address the chair, or stand while the chairperson stands.

#### B. VOTING AREA

The annual conference shall fix the voting area of the conference at the opening business session and voting on all annual conference matters must take place within the prescribed area. The voting area of the conference shall be separated from other areas at the meeting site. All entrances to the voting area shall be staffed by ushers and admission shall be by official badge only. All members of the conference within the voting area when the vote is taken shall be entitled to vote except such persons as otherwise are ineligible to vote.

#### C. SUFFICIENT SEATS SHALL BE PROVIDED

Sufficient seats shall be provided for all lay, clergy, provisional, and associate members and all youth members, members on special assignment, and all other persons entitled by the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies to be within the voting area of the conference.

#### D. VOTERS TO DISPLAY PROPER CREDENTIALS

Members of the conference and others entitled to be seated within the voting area of the conference shall be furnished proper credentials as set forth in Appendix "A" (attached). During balloting, ballots will be distributed to and collected from only those persons displaying the proper credentials.

#### E. METHOD OF VOTING

Method of voting shall be determined by the presiding officer. A count vote may be ordered on call of any member supported by one-third of the members present and voting, in which case the members shall arise as they are able from their seats and stand until counted.

#### F. EXCEPTIONS TO THE NO INTERRUPTION RULE

No member who has the floor may be interrupted except for a question on the matter under consideration, a breach of order, a misrepresentation, to direct the attention of the conference to the fact that the time has arrived for a special order, or to raise a very urgent question of high privilege.

#### G. LIMITS ON SPEAKING

No member shall speak: 1. more than once on the same question if any member who has not spoken desires the floor; 2. more than twice on the same subject under the same motion; 3. any longer than two minutes, unless this two-minute period may be limited or extended by a two-thirds vote of the conference.

#### H. HIGH PRIVILEGE

A member claiming the floor for a very urgent question of high privilege shall be allowed to indicate briefly the nature of the question, and if it be adjudged by the chair to be such, he or she may proceed until the chairperson judges that he or she has exhausted the privilege.

#### I. CALL FOR DIVISION OF ANY QUESTION

Before a vote is taken any member shall have the right to call for a division of any question, if it is subject to such division as he or she indicates. If no member objects, the division shall be made; but if there is objection, the chair shall put the question of division to vote, not waiting for a second.

#### J. MOTIONS TO BE PRESENTED IN WRITING

For the benefit of the secretary, and for the sake of clarification, motions, including amendments, shall be presented in writing.

#### K. SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

The operation of any of the provisions of the Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies or of these Rules of Order and Procedure may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the conference.

#### L. CHANGE OR AMENDMENT OF THE RULES

## X. CONFERENCE RULES AND POLICIES

The Virginia Annual Conference Rules and Policies and these Rules of Order and Procedure may be amended or changed by a two-thirds vote of the conference; provided the proposed change or amendment has originated in the Rules Committee, or has been presented to the conference in writing and referred to this committee, which committee shall report thereon not later than the following day.

### M. ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER APPLIES

The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall apply to any and all situations not covered elsewhere by these rules.

## NAME BADGE COLORS

## Green (lay vote with full lay voting rights, ¶602.4)

Lay Members  
 At-Large District Lay Members  
 District and Conference Lay Leaders  
 Conference President of United Methodist Men  
 Conference President of United Methodist Women  
 Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries  
 Conference Scouting Coordinator  
 President or equivalent of Conference Young Adult Organization  
 President of Conference Youth Organization  
 Chair, Conference College Student Organization  
 District Youth and Young Adult Members (one of each from each district)  
 Diaconal Ministers  
 Retired Diaconal Ministers  
 Deaconesses (see also ¶1314.5)  
 Home Missioners

## White (ordained deacons and elders in full connection with full voting rights, ¶602.1a)

FE Elder in Full Connection (¶334.1)  
 FD Deacon in Full Connection (¶329.2)

Note: Clergy on voluntary leaves of absence (personal, family, transitional) may vote for other clergy delegates to general or jurisdictional conferences and may be elected to serve as delegates themselves (¶354.7). Clergy on involuntary leave of absence may not vote on or be elected as delegates to general or jurisdictional conference (¶355.7).

RM & RD Retired Full Member (¶602.1a)

## White (May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments and clergy matters)

AM Associate Members (¶35 and ¶602.1c)  
 PM Probationary Member under 1992 Discipline (¶413.2, *1992 Discipline*)  
 PD Provisional Deacon (¶35, ¶327.2 and ¶602.1b)  
 PE Provisional Elder (¶35, ¶327.2 and ¶602.1b)  
 EP Full member other denomination serving as a UM Provisional Elder (¶35, ¶347.3b, ¶327.2)  
 DP Deacon recognized from other denomination serving as a UM Provisional Deacon (¶35, ¶347.3b and ¶327.2)  
 RA Retired Associate Member (¶35, ¶602.1c)  
 RP Retired Probationary/Provisional Member (¶35, ¶327.2)

And the following who have completed the educational requirements (Five Year Course of Study, equivalency for the Five Year Course of Study based on approval of GBHEM and VA Conference BOM, or an M.Div. from an approved seminary) and have been under uninterrupted appointment for two years at the time of voting (see ¶35 and Judicial Council ruling 1181):

FL Full time Local Pastor (¶316.6 and ¶602.1d)  
 PL Part time Local Pastor (¶316.6 and ¶602.1d)

## White (May vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conference, and clergy matters)

OF Full member of another denomination (¶346.2)

And the following who have not met the requirements in the section above:

FL Full time Local Pastor (¶316.6 and ¶602.1d)  
 PL Part time Local Pastor (¶316.6 and ¶602.1d)

## White (voice but no vote)

AF Affiliate Member, non-voting (¶334.5)  
 RL Retired Local Pastor (¶320.5)  
 OE Elder Member of other Annual Conference (¶346.1)  
 OD Deacon Member of other Annual Conference (¶346.1)  
 OA Associate Member of other Annual Conference (¶346.1)  
 OP Provisional Member of other Annual Conference (¶346.1)  
 RAF Retired Affiliate Member, non-voting (¶334.5)

## Red (no voice or vote)

SY Lay Supply  
 LM Certified Lay Minister  
 HL Honorable Location (¶359)  
 RHL Retired – Honorable Location (¶359.3)  
 MOD Minister of Another Denomination Serving an Ecumenical Parish in VA  
 G Official Guest  
 ROC Retired full member, other annual conference

## Brown (not official)

All others

**CHARTER FOR THE  
COMMON TABLE FOR CHURCH VITALITY**

**Effective January 1, 2006**

**I. PURPOSE**

The Common Table for Church Vitality (“Common Table”) serves to coordinate and prioritize the ministries and resources of the Virginia Conference. It nurtures, interprets and promotes the vision of the Conference, as well as the mandates of *The Book of Discipline* which relate to Conference work. The Common Table lives out the values of the Conference (stated below in **I.B.**) in its own work, and advocates for the presence and observance of those values in the work and ministry of the Conference.

**A. MISSION**

The mission of the Virginia Annual Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.

**B. VALUES**

The Conference shall embody the following values as it endeavors to assist all churches in the task of *making disciples*:

- Be led by the Holy Spirit.
- Grow spiritually and numerically.
- Serve the local church.
- Connect with and equip the local church for ministries of welcome, nurture and transformation.
- Develop and live out ministries to the poor.
- Strive for excellence.
- Model servant-leadership at all levels.
- Honor diversity and teach inclusivity.
- Practice simplicity.
- Communicate effectively, that others might also.
- Focus on ministry.

**II. MEMBERSHIP**

The Common Table provides spiritual leadership for the Conference to carry out the Purpose of this Charter. The Common Table includes the following 14 voting positions and 2 non-voting positions:

**A. Voting Members**

1. Presiding Bishop
2. Conference Lay Leader
3. Director of Connectional Ministries
4. Cabinet representative assigned by the bishop
5. Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy representative (in accordance with ¶643.5)
6. Chair of Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries (in accordance with ¶634.3)

7. Eight at-large members equally divided between clergy and laity in annual classes, including two young adult/youth representatives, as elected in III

**B. Non-voting Members**

1. Representative from Council on Finance and Administration assigned by the Council on Finance and Administration

The elected Secretary of the Annual Conference shall serve as Secretary for the Common Table without vote.

It is both desirable and consistent with our Conference values that the members of the Common Table represent the diversity of our Conference.

**III. SELECTION OF AT-LARGE COMMON TABLE MEMBERS**

1. Four of the Common Table at-large members (2 clergy and 2 laity) are nominated by the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team and elected by the annual conference. Two of these at-large members must be young adult/youth representatives.

2. Four of the Common Table at-large members (2 clergy and 2 laity) are nominated by the Bishop and elected by the annual conference.

**IV. TERMS OF SERVICE FOR AT-LARGE MEMBERS**

At-large members serve four year terms and are placed in annual classes. If a person is elected to fill an unexpired term of two years or less, that person is eligible for reelection to a full four year term. In the event that a member resigns or dies during his/her term, a replacement shall be nominated by the Conference Leadership Discovery and Development Team or the Bishop, according to method of nomination, and elected by the Annual Conference with the replacement serving until the end of the original term. Any at-large member of the Common Table who is absent from two meetings without excuse or from three consecutive meetings for any reason shall automatically cease to be a member of the Common Table.



**V. MEETINGS**

The Common Table will meet at least quarterly, often in extended day format, to enhance the depth of its work and its own spiritual formation as a faith community. By invitation of the Common Table, others may meet with the Common Table to enhance its knowledge and understanding. Meetings shall be open, consistent with the provisions of *The Book of Discipline*.

**VI. OFFICERS**

The Bishop, Conference Lay Leader and Director of Connectional Ministries will lead the Common Table in interpreting the Conference vision. The Director of Connectional Ministries is the Chairperson. The Conference Lay Leader is the Vice Chairperson. The Secretary of the Annual Conference is the Secretary of the Common Table, without vote.

**VII. COMMITTEES****A. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The Common Table shall appoint a Personnel Committee annually from within its members to assist with the selection and employment of all Conference program staff, both lay and clergy. The Common Table shall appoint the chair of the Personnel Committee. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall serve as an ex officio member of this committee without vote.

**B. GRANTS COMMITTEE**

The Common Table may appoint a Grants Committee annually from among the members of the Conference to advise the Common Table on the following:

1. Grants for connectional ministries beyond the local level, funded through the Conference Benevolence apportionment, and
2. Program grants for local ministry projects funded through the Conference Benevolence apportionment, the United Methodist Women, and the Church Extension Fund.

**C. OTHER COMMITTEES**

The Common Table may designate such other committees as are necessary for its functioning.

**VIII. SELECTION OF DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES AND STAFF**

- A. The Annual Conference shall elect annually upon nomination of the Bishop, and in consultation with the Common Table's Personnel Committee and the Cabinet, an executive officer to be known as the Director of Connectional Ministries. The responsibilities of the Director of Connectional Ministries shall be but are not limited to the following:
  1. To serve as the Chairperson of the Common Table and Co-chairperson, with the Conference Lay Leader, of the Conference Leadership Development and Discovery Team.
  2. To be a communication link between the Conference program agencies and Jurisdictional and General Conference program agencies.
  3. To facilitate communication among the Conference program agencies and the local churches.
  4. To serve as a resource person for district programs and the Common Table in the program planning, implementation and evaluation process.
  5. To supervise the Conference program staff persons.
  6. To serve on other Conference agencies as determined by the Annual Conference, and/or by the Common Table.
- B. Each clergy staff person shall be nominated annually by the Personnel Committee of the Common Table with the request that the Bishop would appoint him or her. Each lay staff person shall be nominated annually by the Personnel Committee of Common Table and employed by the Common Table. Nominations for staff members shall be presented to the Common Table after consultation with the appropriate boards and agencies.
- X. The Director of United Methodist Communications shall carry out the policies and program of Virginia United Methodist Communications, Inc. and shall cooperate with all agencies of the Conference in the use of the media to disseminate news that promotes the diverse work of the Church's life.
- Δ. The Business Manager/Treasurer of the Annual Conference shall serve the Common Table and all of the boards and agencies in direct support of their work and shall oversee the financial operations of the Common Table. In that capacity, the Business Manager/Treasurer shall coordinate this work with the Director of Connectional Ministries.
- E. All Conference program staff shall be employed by and amenable to the Common Table. The Director of Connectional Ministries shall be responsible for the administration and direction of the program staff.
- Φ. Administrative/Technical/Professional Staff of the Common Table shall be employed by the Director of Connectional Ministries in consultation with the appropriate elected staff member as may be requested and as provision for same is made by the Common Table.

**IX. FINANCES**

The Common Table shall present a budget to the Council on Finance and Administration to cover the expenses for the work of the Common Table and the boards and agencies, committees, commissions, task forces and other groups for which it is responsible. The right of the Annual Conference boards and agencies to be heard by the Council on Finance and Administration shall not be denied, as provided by ¶614 the *2016 Book of Discipline*.

**X. MEETINGS OF BOARD AND COMMISSION CHAIRS**

Semi-annual (or as often as necessary) meetings of Chairs (or designated representatives) of Conference Program Boards and Com-

missions that are under the oversight of Common Table will be held for the purpose of aligning conference program and mission with the vision of the Conference. A report of the Chairs' meetings will be provided to Common Table to assist in its responsibilities for its purpose of coordinating and prioritizing the ministries and resources of the Virginia Conference. The boards and commissions that are amenable to Common Table are:

- Board of Church and Society
- Board of Communications
- Board of Discipleship
- Missional Ministries Board
- Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries
- Board of Laity
- Church Development Team
- Commission on Disabilities
- Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy
- Commission on Status and Role of Women

Other Attendees

- a. Conference Staff serving as primary staff resource to these boards and commissions will attend these meetings with voice but without vote.
- b. The Presidents (or designated representatives) of the Conference United Methodist Men and United Methodist Women will be encouraged to participate in these meetings.
- c. Chairs (or designated representatives) of Conference Administrative Boards that are not under the purview of Common Table will be encouraged to participate in these meetings.

The Director of Connectional Ministries shall chair these meetings.

## XI. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the charter not in conflict with *The Book of Discipline* may be made by a majority vote of the Annual Conference and originate as follows:

- (1) upon recommendation of the Common Table, or
- (2) upon petition of a member of the Annual Conference at least 60 days prior to the next annual conference session.

The Common Table shall review the petition(s) and submit its recommendations to the Annual Conference together with the proposed amendment.

## XII. EFFECTIVE DATE OF CHARTER

The Charter for the Common Table for Church Vitality shall become effective January 1, 2006.

### VIRGINIA CONFERENCE GUIDELINES FOR MOVING EXPENSES

A charge, district, or conference agency receiving a new clergy shall be responsible for all his/her moving expenses under the following provisions:

1. A maximum weight limit as weighed in the van of 16,000 lbs. Charges for moving goods over 16,000 lbs. shall be the responsibility of the clergy.
2. A maximum allowance of \$500 for packing materials, cartons (and any packing not performed by the Pastor).
3. A limit of \$125 for piano handling.
4. Where there is a pastor's study at the church and extra stops must be made by the mover for loading and unloading books or office equipment, a maximum allowance of not more than \$165.
5. Seminarians entering the Virginia Conference from outside the conference shall be entitled to the moving expenses listed above, with the limitation that the maximum total reimbursement shall be \$4000.
6. Clergy other than seminarians entering the Virginia Conference from outside the Conference shall be entitled to the moving expenses listed above with the limitation that mileage-based moving expenses shall be based on the distance from the appropriate boundary of the Conference to the place of appointment.
7. Insurance (replacement value equivalency) shall be provided by the receiving church/charge for personal injury or damage to clergy family property during the move. The matter of additional insurance on furnishings above that provided by the hauler shall be the responsibility of the persons moving.
8. If more economical, moves of less than 30 miles shall be arranged at the hourly rate.
9. The Cabinet will review annually the costs of moving and update the moving allowances as necessary.
10. All churches/charges should build a moving-expense fund by annual appropriations for moving expenses, regardless of which year a move may be expected to occur. The Cabinet strongly urges churches/charges to budget each year an amount equal to 1/6 of the most recent move.
11. All moving of clergy will be done professionally and in a responsible manner.
12. Clergy are expected to secure at least two estimates for comparison. Moving estimates must be submitted to the S/PPRC of the receiving church in a prompt manner. Clergy are expected to exercise reasonable standards of stewardship when determining what items to keep/move or dispose. Unless there are physical limitations, all clergy are responsible for the packing of books, linens and general household effects. The new relationship between clergy and receiving congregations has a much better chance of success if the clergy

family avoids the appearance of imposition or entitlement.

13. Additional information on “moving tips” is posted on the Conference web site.

*Reviewed and updated by Cabinet, 02/17*

### COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. The Philosophy of and the Purpose for the Equitable Compensation Program.
  - a. “Ordained ministers are called by God to a lifetime of servant leadership in specialized ministries among the people of God. Ordained ministers are called to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world and the promise of God for creation. Within these specialized ministries, deacons are called to ministries of Word, Service (§328), Compassion, and Justice and elders are called to ministries of Service, Word, Sacrament, and Order (§332). Through these distinctive functions, ordained ministers devote themselves wholly to the work of the Church and to the up building of the ministry of all Christians. They do this through the careful study of Scripture and its faithful interpretation; through effective proclamation of the gospel and responsible administration of the sacraments; through diligent pastoral leadership of their congregations for fruitful discipleship; and by following the guidance of the Holy Spirit in witnessing beyond the congregation in the local community and to the ends of the earth. The ordained ministry is defined by its faithful commitment to servant leadership following the example of Jesus Christ, by its passion for the hallowing of life, and by its concern to link all local ministries with the widest boundaries of the Christian community.” *The Book of Discipline* 2016 (§139)
  - b. “It is the purpose of the commission on equitable compensation to support full-time clergy serving as pastors in the charges of the annual conference by: (a) recommending conference standards for pastoral support; (b) administering funds to be used in base compensation supplementation; and (c) providing counsel and advisory material on pastoral support to district superintendents and committees on pastor-parish relations; (d) submitting an arrearage policy to be adopted by the annual conference. For pastors receiving equitable compensation, once the base compensation supplementation has been paid by the annual conference, and the minimum base compensation and base compensation supplementation has been received by the pastor, the annual conference shall have no further financial obligation or responsibility to the pastor, the charge or anyone else regarding the pastor’s compensation.” *The Book of Discipline* 2016 (§625.2)
  - c. Assumption of the obligations of the itinerancy, required to be made at the time of admission into the Conference, put the church under the counter obligation of providing support for the entire ministry of the church. In view of the expectation which the church holds for its clergy in the area of professional separation and competence, it is incumbent upon the church to see that compensation is adequate for the professional and personal requirements of its clergy, and that they are determined and administered in a manner appropriate to a professional understanding of the ministerial vocation.
2. Types of Equitable Compensation Support.
  - a. Minimum Compensation Support: The commission annually proposes to the Annual Conference a schedule of minimum compensation for ministers by the various statuses of conference relationship and floor schedule to be met by the charge. In approving this schedule, the Conference guarantees each of its ministers a certain minimum compensation. Unless a minister voluntarily waives this right, he/she is entitled to an appointment where the compensation, including supplements from the conference, district, and other sources will be at least the minimum for his/her category.
  - b. Compensation supplementation is support provided to charges which require support in addition to that called for by the Minimum Compensation program. Such charges fall into two groups:
    - (1) Charges with part-time or retired pastors.
    - (2) Charges where there is a need for compensation higher than the minimum.
3. Money for the Equitable Compensation Fund.
  - a. The grants and administrative expenses of the commission are borne by the Equitable Compensation Fund.
  - b. Annually the commission estimates the amount needed for Equitable Compensation grants, and with the concurrence of the Council on Finance and Administration, recommends an amount to the Annual Conference to be apportioned to the districts and charges of the conference.
  - c. As set forth in *The Book of Discipline* 2016 (§622) “When the apportionments for bishops, district superintendents, conference claimants, and the Equitable Compensation Fund for the several districts and charges have been determined, payments made to the same in each pastoral charge shall be exactly proportional to the amount paid on the clergy base compensation. (§818.3) The treasurer or treasurers of each pastoral charge shall accordingly make proportional distribution of the funds raised in that charge for the support of the ordained ministry and shall remit monthly if practicable and quarterly at the latest the items for bishops, district superintendents, conference claimants, and the Equitable Compensation Fund to the proper treasurer or treasurers.”
4. For Equitable Compensation purposes, the term “compensation” includes the amounts of ministerial support designated as salary and accountable reimbursement.
5. The Minimum Compensation Schedule, including the Floor, shall be recommended by the commission and the schedule, as approved by the Annual Conference, shall be published in the conference *Journal*.
6. Eligibility for Minimum Compensation Support.
  - a. The clergy must be rendering full-time service, that is their efforts must fully satisfy the Disciplinary description of the office of the minister and they must, in the judgment of his/her district superintendent, be rendering full-time service to the charge to which they have been appointed as pastor or associate pastor.
  - b. The “floor” is the minimum the charge must pay (obtained from sources other than Equitable Compensation Fund) in order to be eligible to receive minimum salary support.
7. Eligibility for Salary Supplementation.

## X. CONFERENCE RULES AND POLICIES

- a. All charges are eligible with special considerations made for ethnic pastors serving ethnic ministries.
  - b. The application must be supported by a recommendation of the district superintendent.
  - c. The commission strongly discourages applications from charges whose compensation is above the Conference Average Compensation (CAC).
8. Charges receiving support from the Equitable Compensation Commission are encouraged to take steps regularly toward becoming self-supporting and toward the increasing of the total level of support of their ministers. The following actions should encourage these steps:
- a. The district superintendents will annually review each application for Equitable Compensation aid with the appropriate charge conference.
  - b. Equitable Compensation aid to each full-time pastor will be reduced \$1 for each \$2 increase established and paid by the charge. When salary paid by the church exceeds the minimum applicable level the Equitable Compensation support will cease, unless the Equitable Compensation Commission waives this requirement under special circumstances.
9. How applications for aid are submitted.
- a. All applications shall be submitted on forms provided by the commission.
  - b. Applications shall include the name and district of the charge, the number of churches on the charge, the name and ministerial category of the minister, a statement of whether the minister is serving full or part time, together with all amounts of ministerial support listed by source both for the period ending and the period beginning. The application shall state the total salary needed for the minister and the amount of aid necessary to obtain that total.
  - c. Applications shall be prepared, signed by the chair of the staff-parish relationship committee of the charge and the district superintendent.
  - d. A copy of the current church/charge budget must be submitted with the application along with a copy of the most recent audited financial statements.
  - e. Applications shall be submitted to the conference treasurer who shall provide each member of the commission with a copy of each application at least one week before the meeting at which the application will be considered.
  - f. Applications are generally submitted in February and May for support to begin on July 1st. Mid-appointment year requests are submitted by October 31st. The deadline for such applications is listed each year in the Conference Calendar.
10. How appropriations are made.
- a. The Commission meets twice during the appointment-making process in conjunction with the Cabinet's schedule to review applications for Equitable Compensation Grants. The Commission also meets in November to review any mid-appointment year requests.
  - b. Requirements which a charge must meet in order to receive Minimum Compensation Support may be waived by a two-thirds vote of the commission.
  - c. Compensation Supplementation will be granted by action of the commission on recommendations of the district superintendent in the categories described in Paragraph 7.
11. Methods of Payment.
- a. Minimum compensation support and supplementation will be paid through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) by the conference treasurer to the charge receiving aid by the 10th day of each month.
  - b. If a charge fails to maintain a current status on Pension payments to VUMPI, the Conference Treasurer's Office shall send the Equitable Compensation Support directly to VUMPI until such arrearages are satisfied.
  - c. The commission chairperson shall keep the conference treasurer regularly informed as to the appropriations made by the commission and any changes in payments which may be necessary because of appointments or changes in ministerial status.

*Updated 7/1/2016*

### **EQUITABLE COMPENSATION GUIDELINES**

The commission, at the request of the Bishop and the Cabinet, developed guidelines for requests, approval and time periods for supplementation provided by conference funds. It is felt that these guidelines will provide a uniform standard across the conference in support of the various charges that may require funds.

#### **I. New Requests**

##### **A. New Growth Situation Request/New Churches**

1. Request must be approved by the District Board of Church Location and Building.
2. Request with the written District Board of Church Location approval giving rationale for the request should be received by the

November Equitable

Compensation meeting in order to be approved for the following appointment year.

3. Will be funded according to the following formula:

- 100% for first 18 months (e.g., July 2006 through Dec. 2007)
- 80% second full calendar year
- 60% third full calendar year
- continued reduction at 20% per year

##### **B. New Mission/Ethnic Churches**

1. Request must be approved by the District Board of Church Location and Building.
2. Request with the written District Board of Church Location approval giving rationale for the request should be received by the

November Equitable Compensation meeting in order to be approved for the following appointment year.

3. Will be funded according to the following formula:

- 100% for first 30 months (e.g., July 2006 through Dec. 2008)
- 85% third full calendar year
- 70% fourth full calendar year
- continued reduction at 15% per year

It is suggested that if a new church or mission is not expected to be self-sufficient at the end of this time, that alternate funding sources be identified (i.e. district or sponsoring churches) while a new church is in the planning stages.

## II. Ongoing Requests

All churches requesting Equitable Compensation assistance, *who are presently receiving Equitable Compensation assistance*, must have a yearly stewardship campaign, and submit Table I and II of the Year-End Reports, the Dec. 31 year-end treasurer's report and are asked to adhere to the following schedules:

### A. Ongoing "Maintenance" churches

All churches in the "Maintenance Category" should make every attempt to be off Equitable Compensation at the end of five years. In order to do this, the commission asks that any request be reduced at least 20% from the present year's request as follows:

- 100% (present year)
- 80% second year
- 60% third year
- 40% fourth year
- 20% fifth year

If a church cannot adhere to this schedule, letters detailing the reasons must be submitted each year by the District Superintendent and the Church Council of the church/charge receiving Equitable Compensation assistance.

### B. Ongoing Ethnic Minority/Mission Churches

All churches in the "Ethnic Minority/Mission Categories" should make every attempt to be off Equitable Compensation at the rate of 10% a year, whether by becoming self-sufficient or by developing new forms of funding. The suggested schedule is as follows:

- 100% (present year)
- 90% second year
- 80% third year
- Continued reduction at 10% per year

If a church cannot adhere to this schedule, letters detailing the reasons must be submitted each year by the District Superintendent and the Church Council of the church/charge receiving Equitable Compensation assistance.

## MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE PARSONAGE

The *2016 Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church states that the Church Council shall "review the recommendation of the committee on pastor-parish relations regarding provision of adequate housing for the pastor(s), and report the same to the charge conference for approval. Housing provisions shall comply with the annual conference housing policy and parsonage standards. Housing shall not be considered as part of compensation or remuneration." (§252.4e)

The Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations Committee also has consultative power and responsibilities for the parsonage (§258.2g(16)). This committee is to consult with the Church Council to provide for "housing (which may be a church-owned parsonage or housing allowance in lieu of parsonage if in compliance with the policy of the annual conference)." This paragraph also includes these words: "The parsonage is to be mutually respected by the pastor's family as the property of the church and by the church as a place of privacy for the pastor's family. The committee will follow up to assure timely resolution of parsonage problems affecting the health of the pastor or pastor's family. The chairperson of the committee on pastor-parish relations, the chairperson of the board of trustees, and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to assure proper maintenance."

The Board of Trustees of the local church is charged with supervision, oversight and care of property, including the church-owned parsonage. The Charge Conference may assign some of these duties to the chair of a Parsonage Committee.

## I. The House

A. Ownership: The parsonage is acquired and maintained by the charge, subject to the direction of the Charge Conference. The location, purchase, and/or building of a parsonage must be approved by the District Board of Church Location and Building. (§2544)

B. Title to Property: The parsonage property must be held by the charge Board of Trustees in trust for the use and occupancy of pastors in the United Methodist Church. (§2503.2)

C. Location: The parsonage of a station church should be located within the geographical parish of the church. The parsonage of a charge should be near the center of the charge and accessible to members. It should be convenient to a school, a shopping area, and church of the charge. Preferably parsonages should not be located immediately adjacent to the church, so that the pastor's family will be ensured reasonable privacy. Such location also facilitates resale.

D. Planning and Financing: The purchase or building plan must be approved by the Charge Conference after 10 days' notice of the meeting. The pastor, district superintendent, and the district Board of Church Location and Building must consent to the purchase. Provisions of the *Book of Discipline* must be observed. The sale or relocation must conform to guidelines in the *Discipline*.

E. Administration: The *Discipline* requires the Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations Committee to see that the Trustees provide adequate and comfortable residence for the pastor and maintain its proper upkeep and furnishings. "The chairperson of the Trustees or the chairperson of the parsonage committee if one exists, the chairperson of the committee on pastor-parish relations, and the pastor shall make an

## X. CONFERENCE RULES AND POLICIES

annual review of the church-owned parsonage to ensure proper maintenance.” (§2533.4 and §258.2g(16)). The pastor’s family should be consulted in the selection of equipment, fixtures, and color schemes. (See *Annual Review Inventory* form). The Annual Review Inventory Report shall be submitted to the District Superintendent and will be reviewed by the Parsonages’ Support Committee.

The Trustees’ annual budget should be adequate to provide maintenance of the parsonage and necessary replacement of furnishings for which the Trustees have responsibility.

Since insurance carried by the church will not cover personal effects of the parsonage family, the family is urged to secure a tenant’s policy.

F. Inventory: A complete inventory of all furnishings, and equipment shall be maintained, one copy with the Pastor-Staff Parish Relations Committee and/or the Trustees, a second copy with the parsonage family, and a third copy for the district superintendent attached to the *Annual Review Inventory*. This inventory should include the purchase date of items listed, purchase price, and any major repair work done on each. Condition of furnishings at the time of the annual review should be noted. (See Parsonage Inventory Form)

### II. House Arrangement and Equipment

A. Minimum Size: The living room shall measure at least 280 square feet; or living and dining room combination shall be 330 square feet. Bedrooms shall measure no less than 144 square feet each, with one not less than 168 square feet.

B. Rooms: The parsonage should have a minimum of seven rooms: at least three bedrooms with ample closet space in each, living room, dining room, kitchen, study (if not furnished outside the parsonage), at least 1½ baths, and ample dry storage space large enough for major pieces of furniture and large packing boxes. An additional bedroom, a family room, a utility room, and a garage are also desirable. If a pastor’s office is included, it should be on the first floor with an outside entrance or entry from front hall or both or on the terrace level with outside entry. Usual office furnishings, telephone, bookshelves, and a storage closet for supplies should be provided.

Newly constructed or newly purchased parsonages shall include on the ground floor level one room which could be used as a bedroom by a person with a handicapping condition, a fully accessible bathroom and laundry facilities. (§2533.6)

C. Housing Necessities:

- Central heating plant
- Complete insulation, including weather stripping, storm windows, ceiling, sidewall and floor insulation. Carpeting is desirable as a further means of insulation.
- Central air conditioning is desirable everywhere, and a necessity in some areas of the conference.
- Annual servicing of all heating and air conditioning equipment.
- At least one telephone jack on each floor.
- Dead bolt locks on all exterior doors.
- Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.
- Housing must be maintained free of health hazards.
- Exterminator/pest control service and an annual termite inspection.
- All major appliances, including washer, dryer, stove, refrigerator, automatic hot water heater.
- Kitchen: sink, built-in cabinets, a storage or supply closet, counter work surfaces, adequate electrical outlets properly grounded. Where possible, a garbage disposal and dishwasher should be provided.
- At least one telephone permanently in the house.

D. Furnishings and Maintenance:

1. Provided by the Church/Charge:

- Furniture for the parsonage living room, foyer, dining room, and kitchen shall be provided. If a parsonage has more than three bedrooms, the church/charge shall provide furnishings for all bedrooms over three. All parsonage wall-to-wall floor coverings or rugs shall be furnished by the church/charge. Regular professional cleaning shall be the responsibility of the church/charge for all living spaces furnished by church/charge.
- Window shades or blinds shall be provided in all rooms. Window treatments, and the responsibility for their maintenance/cleaning, shall be provided for the living room, dining room, and foyer.
- Adequate light fixtures/lamps shall be provided for all living spaces furnished.

2. Provided by the Pastor:

- Furniture as desired for all rooms except living room, foyer, dining room, kitchen, and bedrooms more than three.
- Window treatments as desired for rooms other than living room, foyer and dining room, as well as their maintenance/cleaning.
- Bed, bath, and kitchen linens.
- Cookware, utensils, and small appliances.
- China, crystal/glassware, flatware.
- Additional accessories such as pictures, lamps, family pieces, etc. which personalize a home.

E. Exterior

- Trees and shrubbery should be provided where needed.
- Landscaping and normal fertilization shall be the responsibility of the church/charge.
- Cutting of the lawn and trimming of the shrubs is the responsibility of the residents.
- A lawn mover, adequate for the size of the lawn, shall be provided by the church/charge.
- A TV antenna or cable hook-up should be provided.

### III. General Guidelines

A. Privacy and Care: Since the parsonage is the home of the pastor and his/her family, their rights and privacy should be respected by the

congregation. The occupants must ensure that the parsonage receives proper care.

B. Gifts: A written statement should accompany any gift of furniture or furnishings, designating whether the gift is to permanently remain at the parsonage or is a personal gift to the pastor's family. Gifts shall be received without conditions and with right of refusal.

C. Placement of Furniture: Use and placement of church-owned furnishings within the parsonage shall be at the discretion of the parsonage occupants.

D. When a move occurs, refer to the "Policy at the Time of Change of Pastors" below.

*Updated by Cabinet, July 2002, revised 12/2009, updated 1/2013*

### POLICY AT THE TIME OF CHANGE OF PASTORS

I. The Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations Committee will supply to the district superintendent the list of people serving on the Local Church Parsonage Committee with the chairperson's address and telephone number.

II. The district superintendent will contact the chairperson of the Local Church Parsonage Committee asking that the committee meet at the parsonage with the pastor, pastor's spouse (if applicable), and if requested by the district superintendent, a representative from the Parsonages Support Committee to inspect the parsonage, using the following guidelines:

A. Check complete inventory (see *Inventory for Leaving the Parsonage*).

B. Inspect each room for needed repairs, refurbishing, paint, etc. with attention to who is accountable beyond normal wear and tear.

C. Inspect electrical, heating, cooling, and plumbing systems..

D. Evaluate conditions of structure, inside and outside, including church-owned furnishings, appliances and systems.

E. Pastor shall provide information about condition of appliances and systems known only to occupant.

III. After parsonage inspection by the Local Church Parsonage Committee and the pastor:

A. The Committee will:

- Work with the Church Council to arrange for needed repairs, refurbishing, painting, etc.
- Floors cleaned and waxed, rugs shampooed.
- Keep the district superintendent informed concerning condition of the parsonage.
- Inspect parsonage again nearer moving time.
- Check the Parsonage Inventory with the parsonage family before their departure, and with the new parsonage family upon their arrival.
- Have a representative of the Committee at the parsonage as the parsonage family moves.
- Make necessary last minute corrections to the parsonage before the new family arrives.
- Make sure that all utilities remain connected, the deposit for public utilities having been made by the church/charge.

B. The pastor will:

- Leave the parsonage clean. The outgoing parsonage family is responsible for leaving the house and furnishings clean and in move-in condition. This means at least:
  - No items should be left in storage areas (attic, garage, basement, shed, closets, etc.)
  - Windows washed.
  - Refrigerator emptied and cleaned.
  - Bathrooms scrubbed.
  - Stoves and vent hoods thoroughly cleaned.
  - Fireplace cleaned.
  - Yard trimmed and mowed.
  - All garbage removed from the property.

(see *Inventory for Leaving the Parsonage* form).

- Have repaired or cleaned at his/her expense, any damage due to negligence and/or pets.
- Assure uninterrupted utility service for the incoming pastor. Utilities should be in the church's name, with the parsonage address, to avoid termination of services.
- The parsonage family shall leave for the successor: a list of whom to call in case of.....; how to fix.....; where to find.....; and a file of guarantees, operating instructions, manuals, etc..

IV. In those instances when a clergy moves out of a parsonage and leaves the house inadequately cleaned and/or damaged, and the parsonage requires work, the expense of which is clearly the responsibility of the outgoing clergy, then the expense for such cleaning/repair shall be billed to the outgoing minister.

A. The Local Church Parsonage Committee and two members of the Parsonages Support Committee shall inspect the parsonage on moving day or as soon as possible and decide how much of the required cleaning/repair work, if any, is the responsibility of the outgoing pastor.

B. The outgoing pastor shall be notified immediately by telephone and registered mail. The decision should be communicated to the pastor immediately, and if the pastor be deemed wholly or partially responsible, then the cleaning/repair bill should be sent to the outgoing pastor.

C. If, after 30 days, this bill is not paid, or arrangements made to pay it, a second notice shall be sent. If, by the end of 45 days, the bill remains unpaid, a copy of the bill and the reasons for it shall be sent to the minister's current district superintendent for assistance in securing payment.

*Updated by Cabinet, July 2002, revised 12/2009, updated 1/2013*

## VIRGINIA CONFERENCE STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT POLICY

### *Introduction*

The purpose of this Statement of Investment Objectives and Guidelines is to assist in the monitoring and supervision of the assets of the Virginia United Methodist Conference (“Conference”). The funds represent the Conference funds, Foundation funds, and the funds of various local churches.

- General Investment Principles
- Objectives
- Asset Allocation Guidelines
- Investment Manager Guidelines
- Investment Performance Objectives
- Performance Monitoring
- Investment Manager Responsibilities

Investment styles covered in this document include traditional investments (e.g., bonds, large cap growth and value equity) but do not include alternative investments (e.g., hedge funds, private equity, timberland).

### *General Investment Principles*

- The funds shall be invested with the care, skill, prudence, and diligence under the circumstances then prevailing that a prudent person would use in the investment of a Foundation of like character and with like aims.
- Investments shall be so diversified so as to minimize the risk of large losses.
- The trustees may employ one or more investment managers of varying styles and philosophies to attain their objectives.
- Cash is to be employed productively at all times by investment in short-term cash equivalents to provide safety, liquidity, and return.

### *Investment Management Policy*

- Preservation of Capital - Consistent with their respective investment styles and philosophies, investment managers should make reasonable efforts to preserve capital, understanding that losses may occur in individual securities.
- Risk Aversion - Understanding that risk is present in all types of securities and investment styles, the trustees recognize that some risk is necessary to produce long-term investment results that are sufficient to meet the stated investment objectives. However, the investment managers are to make reasonable efforts to control risk, and will be evaluated regularly to ensure that that risk assumed is commensurate with the given investment style and objectives.
- Adherence to Investment Discipline - Investment managers are expected to adhere to the investment management styles for which they were hired. Managers will be evaluated regularly for adherence to investment discipline.

### *Objectives*

The primary objective for the funds is to achieve an average annual net rate of return of CPI + 5.5%. The investment horizon of the funds is fairly long-term in nature. However, the trustees are sensitive to severe short-term losses in the funds on an absolute and relative basis.

### *Social Responsibility*

As defined in the 2008 *Book of Discipline* the Council on Finance and Administration (“Council”) shall develop, maintain, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated plan of fiscal and administrative policies, procedures, and management services for the Annual Conference including

- Policies governing the investment of Conference funds (except for pension funds) whether in debt or equity, short-term or long-term instruments, with the aim of maximizing funds available for mission in a manner consistent with the preservation of capital and with the Social Principles of the Church. A statement of such policies shall be presented in the conference Journal.
- Authorizing the Conference Treasurer to invest in funds in accordance with policies’ and procedures established by the Council. A listing of securities held shall be printed annually in the conference *Journal*.

### *Investment Manager Guidelines*

Note: The investment manager guidelines pertain to separately manager accounts. In the case of mutual funds or commingled funds, the guidelines are outlined in the fund’s prospectus or offering memorandum.

### *General Guidelines*

#### Restricted Transaction

- Purchasing of securities on margin or speculative short sales.
- Borrowing of money.
- Pledging, mortgaging, or hypothecating of any securities except for loans of securities that are fully collateralized.
- Purchase of the securities of the investment managers, its parent, or its affiliates.
- Purchase or sale of futures or options for speculation or leverage.
- Purchase or sale of commodities, commodity contracts, or illiquid interest in real estate or mortgages.
- Socially Responsible Investments - It shall be the policy of The United Methodist Church that all general boards and agencies, including the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and all administrative agencies and institutions, including hospitals, homes, educational institutions, Annual Conferences, foundations, and local churches, shall, in the investment of money, make a conscious effort to invest in institutions, companies, corporations, or funds whose practices are consistent with the goals outlined in the Social Principles; and shall endeavor to avoid instruments that appear likely, directly or indirectly, to support racial discrimination, violation of human rights, sweatshop or forced labor, gambling, or the production of nuclear armaments, alcoholic beverages or tobacco, or companies dealing in pornography. The boards and agencies are to give careful consideration to shareholder advocacy, including advocacy of corporate disinvestment.



### Diversification

Investment managers are responsible for achieving a level of diversification in their portfolio that is prudent and consistently applied. Concentrations in individual securities, industries and economic sectors should not be so high as to subject the overall portfolio to undue risk.

### Liquidity

When purchasing a security to place in a portfolio, it is expected that each manager will consider their aggregate holdings among all of their accounts to ensure that their total position in the security will not be so large as to inhibit rapid liquidation of the security.

### Cash

It is expected that the managers will run fully invested portfolios. It is not the policy of the Conference and Foundation to try to time the market. It is understood that frictional cash can be a result of the buy and sell process. However, if cash exceeds 10% of the manager's portfolio, the manager should communicate to the Foundation, Conference and its consultant in writing the reasons for the high cash level and the time frame needed to get the portfolio fully invested.

### *Domestic Equity Manager Guidelines*

- The majority of the holdings in these portfolios should consist of domestic (U.S.) common stock. Large to medium capitalization issues are preferred. Other acceptable investments on a limited basis include preferred stock, convertible securities and cash equivalents.
- Portfolios should be diversified. Specifically, 75% of each investment manager's portfolio should be diversified to the extent that no individual security makes up more than 5% of the total assets at the current market value. Discretion may be taken in the remaining 25% of a portfolio, but the manager should not allow any one position to exceed 8% of the portfolio's total market value.
- A concentration in one economic sector (e.g., transportation) should not be so great as to exceed 30% of the manager's portfolio measured at market value or two times the benchmark index, whichever is greater.
- The manager should follow a clearly defined sell discipline.

### *Fixed Income Manager Guidelines*

- Holdings should consist primarily of domestic (U.S.) fixed-income securities with adequate liquidity. The portfolio should maintain a weighted average portfolio quality rating of at least "A." Securities that are issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Treasury or Government agencies and instrumentalities will be considered AAA.
- The maximum position in a single issuer's securities should not exceed 5% of the portfolio's assets measured at cost or 8% of the portfolio measured at market value. Holdings in securities issued or guaranteed by the U.S. Treasury or U.S. Government agencies and instrumentalities are excepted from this restriction.
- The duration of the portfolio should be targeted to that of the Lehman Brothers Intermediate Aggregate Index. The duration may range within 20% of the duration of this index.
- Purchases should be limited to readily marketable securities.
- Purchases of securities rated below investment grade are limited to 10% of the portfolio, measured at market value, and are limited to a rating of "B" or better.
- Foreign (non-U.S. domiciled) securities denominated in U.S. dollars are limited to 10% of the portfolio, measured at market value.
- Non-U.S. dollar denominated securities are prohibited.

### *Investment Performance Objectives*

Investment managers will be reviewed on a quantitative basis in the form of quarterly reports to be provided by the consultant. Qualitative factors will also be considered such as adherence to each manager's stated investment process, and to the policy guidelines stated in this document. Managers will be reviewed on a net of fees basis.

### Large Cap Value Manager

Over a rolling three-year period, the annualized total return of the manager should exceed the annualized total return of the Russell 1000 Value Index. The manager should rank in the upper 25th percentile of a universe of similar managers for the rolling three-year period.

### Large Cap Growth Manager

Over a rolling three-year period, the annualized total return of the manager should exceed the annualized total return of the Russell 1000 Growth Index. The manager should rank in the upper 25th percentile of a universe of similar managers for the rolling three-year period.

### Bond Manager

Over a rolling three-year period, the annualized total return of the manager should exceed the annualized total return of the Lehman Brothers Intermediate Aggregate Index. The manager should rank in the upper 25th percentile of a universe of similar managers for the rolling three-year period.

### Performance Meeting

The consultant and the Investment Committee shall monitor the overall performance of the funds to insure its meeting of its objectives. Individual manager monitoring will include the following:

Maintaining both a short-term and long-term perspective, the Consultant will evaluate whether each manager has:

- Performed satisfactorily when compared with the specific objectives for its portfolio;
- Produced results that compare favorably to other investment managers with similar portfolios; and
- Adhered to the relevant policies and objectives.

Among the events that the consultant will examine closely in its review of the investment managers are:

- Poor performance relative to objectives over a three- to five-year period,
- A change in the portfolio manager;
- The departure of one or more key investment professionals;
- Violation of an investment guideline; and

- A change in the ownership or control of the investment management organization.

Any of the above factors will result in a discussion of whether to retain an investment manager. The consultant will provide input in the discussion, but final decisions for any changes rest with the Investment Committee.

#### *Investment Manager Responsibilities*

- Submit a written request to the trustees whenever the investment manager feels that the Statement of Investment Objectives should be changed
- Provide quarterly reports describing portfolio holdings, transactions, and performance.
- Vote proxies received after careful assessment of the issues involved.
- Promptly inform the trustees and its consultant of all significant matters pertaining to the investment management of the assets of the Foundation. For example, significant changes in the ownership, affiliation, organizational structure, financial condition, and staffing of the firm.
- Be available to meet with the trustees on a reasonable basis.
- Manage the funds in accordance with the policy guidelines and objectives expressed in this document, or in a separate written agreement that has received approval from the trustees when deviation is deemed prudent and desirable.

### **BENEFIT PLANS PROVIDED TO CLERGY IN THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE**

Benefit plans provided to clergy in the Virginia Conference are primarily administered by Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. (VUM-PI), an independent agency of the Virginia Conference. Several of the denominational plans are administered by **Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath), which is the administrative agency of The United Methodist Church charged with supervising and administering retirement plans, investment funds and health and welfare benefit plans for the benefit of active and retired clergy and lay employees of the Church. VUMPI assists Wespath with the administration of the denominational plans and serves as an advocate and resource for Virginia Conference clergy enrolled in those plans. VUMPI (or its vendors, if applicable) is responsible for determining if a participant qualifies to receive a benefit under programs administered by VUMPI. Wespath is responsible for determining if a participant qualifies to receive a benefit under one or more of the denominational pension, disability or life insurance plans, and what level of benefits will be payable to the participant or his or her beneficiaries.**

Funding, eligibility and plan designs of the various clergy benefit programs are recommended by VUMPI for Virginia Conference approval. The following plans are administered for the benefit of Virginia Conference Clergy and eligible lay employees:

- Active Clergy Health Plan
- Retired Clergy Health Plan
- Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP)
- Supplemental Life Insurance Plan
- Denominational Pension and Savings Plans
  - Pre-1982 Plan
  - Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP)
  - Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP)
  - United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP)
- Gift Benefit

Following are details regarding eligibility, administration and funding of the benefit programs administered by VUMPI:

#### **Active Clergy Health Plan**

The Active Clergy Health Plan is a self insured health plan administered by VUMPI for the benefit of Virginia Conference clergy and eligible lay employees. The following are eligible for enrollment in the Active Clergy Health Plan:

- Full time clergy, including Elders, Deacons and Local Pastors, serving under episcopal appointment
- Clergy serving in full time Extension Ministry appointments in organizations controlled by The United Methodist Church, as determined by VUMPI
- Widowed spouses of active clergy that were enrolled in the active clergy health plan at the time of death are eligible to continue enrollment in the active clergy health plan until age 65, at which time their eligibility will be determined for the retired clergy health plan
- Eligible dependents of deceased active clergy that were enrolled in the active clergy health plan at the time of death are eligible to continue enrollment in the active clergy health plan until age 26
- Clergy on Medical Leave and receiving long-term disability income benefits from Wespath are eligible for the health plan designed for clergy on medical leave with CPP benefits, subject to payment of the required participant contribution for that plan
- Clergy on Medical Leave who are not receiving long-term disability income benefits from Wespath are eligible for the Active Clergy Health Plan for up to one year, subject to payment of the required participant contribution for the Active Clergy plan
- Clergy on Voluntary Leave of Absence or Sabbatical Leave may participate in the active clergy health plan for up to one year, provided they pay 100 percent of the Active Clergy Health Plan cost

- Student Local Pastors may participate in the active clergy health plan for up to one year, provided they pay 100 percent of the Active Clergy Health Plan cost
- Clergy appointed to attend seminary may participate in the active clergy health plan for up to one year, provided they pay 100 percent of the Active Clergy Health Plan cost

A Virginia Conference clergyperson who has retired from The United Methodist Church under ¶357 (or succeeding paragraph) of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* is no longer eligible to enroll in the Active Clergy Health Plan. If the clergyperson terminates his/her retired relationship to the Virginia Conference and returns to full time active appointment under an active Conference relationship status, that clergyperson and his/her spouse and eligible dependents may regain eligibility for enrollment in the Active Clergy Health Plan.

Clergy on Medical Leave and receiving long term disability income benefits from Wespath must file for and enroll in Medicare Parts A and B as soon as they become eligible in order to remain enrolled in the Active Clergy Health Plan.

The Active Clergy Health Plan is administered by VUMPI. The plan is self insured and is primarily funded by Conference resources through apportionments and contributions from plan participants. The continuation of this plan depends largely upon the ongoing ability of the Virginia Conference to finance the plan benefits. Plan design changes and participant contributions are recommended for Annual Conference approval. Due to ongoing increases in general health care costs, it should be expected that VUMPI will periodically recommend increases in the Active Clergy Health Plan apportionment and personal contributions. Similarly, reductions in plan benefits may be recommended in order to reduce the overall cost of the Active Clergy Health Plan. The adoption of the Active Clergy Health Plan is not considered binding upon the Conference for more than one year at a time.

Eligible clergy and lay employees who wish to enroll in the Active Clergy Health Plan may enroll through VUMPI. Prospective enrollees may contact VUMPI at either 804-521-1100 or 1-800-768-6040.

Summary plan descriptions and additional program details regarding the Active Clergy Health Plan are available at [www.vumpi.org](http://www.vumpi.org).

### Retired Clergy Health Plan

The health plan made available to eligible retirees of the Virginia Conference includes a plan for those retired clergy who are not yet eligible for Medicare and a separate plan for those who are eligible for and enrolled in Medicare. The plan for pre-Medicare-eligible retirees is a self insured health plan. The plan for Medicare-eligible retirees consists of a fully insured Medicare Advantage plan option and a Conference-funded Retiree Reimbursement Account option. The following are eligible for enrollment in the Retired Clergy Health Plan:

- A retired Virginia Conference clergyperson whose retirement date is effective prior to January 1, 2019, is eligible to participate in the Retired Clergy Health Plan if paragraphs 1 and 2 below are satisfied.
  1. A Clergy satisfies the requirements of this paragraph if he or she retires in connection with the Virginia United Methodist Conference under ¶357.1-3 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline*.
  2. A Clergy or Diaconal Minister satisfies the requirements of this paragraph if he or she meets the criteria in either subparagraph a, b or c below:
    - α. This subparagraph is satisfied if a Clergy or Diaconal Minister is age 62 or above on the date of retirement, or has at least 30 years of service on the date of retirement, and has served the Virginia United Methodist Conference during the 10 consecutive years immediately prior to retirement in full time Episcopal appointments where the salary paying units have contributed towards the Active Clergy Health Plan apportionment, or
    - β. This subparagraph is satisfied if a Clergy or Diaconal Minister is age 62 or above on the date of retirement, or has at least 30 years of service on the date of retirement, and has served the Virginia United Methodist Conference a minimum of 30 years in full time Episcopal appointments where the salary paying units have contributed towards the Active Clergy Health Plan apportionment, or
    - χ. This subparagraph is satisfied if a Clergy or Diaconal Minister who has served 10 years in full time Episcopal appointments with the Virginia United Methodist Conference where the salary paying units have contributed towards the Active Clergy Health Plan apportionment, retires prior to age 62 with fewer than 30 years of service, or is appointed to Approved Leave, e.g., Sabbatical, Family Leave or Voluntary Leave of Absence, or is appointed to Extension Ministry (to an agency that is not eligible to participate in the Active Clergy Health Plan), or is appointed On Loan to another United Methodist Conference. A Clergy or Diaconal Minister meeting the requirements of this subparagraph maintains eligibility to enroll in the Retiree Health Plan by paying a monthly Retiree Health Plan Access Fee until the date of enrollment in the Retiree Health Plan.

The Retiree Health Plan Access Fee is determined annually by the VUMPI Board of Directors and is published in the *Journal* of the Virginia United Methodist Conference. Payment of the Retiree Health Plan Access Fee freezes the clergyperson's years of credit that had been accumulated prior to entering one of the above-mentioned statuses. Payment of the access fee does not constitute enrollment in the Active Clergy Health Plan or the Retired Clergy Health Plan. Additional years of credit for eligibility or the vesting and contribution schedule are not accrued while the Retiree Health Plan Access Fee is paid.

The Retiree Health Plan Access Fee must be paid monthly (unless other arrangements have been made with VUMPI, in writing and signed

by both parties) until the clergyperson is eligible to enroll in the Retired Clergy Health Plan.

There was a one time open enrollment period (January 1-31, 2004) for those described in this paragraph who were not enrolled in the Active Clergy Health Plan, and who wanted to freeze their eligibility for the Retired Clergy Health Plan. If retirement occurs prior to age 62 and the retiree does not have 30 years of service, the retiree may continue enrollment in the Active Clergy Health Plan until attaining the age of 62, by paying 100 percent of the Active Clergy Health Plan cost.

For clergy retiring on or after January 1, 2019, the following years are to be counted towards determining eligibility for the Conference-sponsored retiree health plans:

- All years of full time ministry in Virginia Conference churches, plus
- All years of full time ministry other than in appointment to Virginia Conference churches but with enrollment in the Virginia Conference-sponsored health plan

Beginning January 1, 2019 there will no longer be a requirement to have ten consecutive years of full time ministry immediately preceding retirement. With this change, the Retiree Health Plan Access Fee will no longer be required in 2019.

Clergy retiring under ¶357.2.a of the *2016 Book of Discipline* (voluntary retirement with twenty years of service) may remain enrolled in the Conference-sponsored health plan for active clergy, and are required to pay the full rates for lay employees. At the age of 62, the retiree becomes eligible for enrollment in the Retired Clergy Health Plan, with plan eligibility and participant contributions consistent with their years of credit at retirement.

Additional points of clarification:

1. Years of credit will be determined at retirement.
2. A Year of credit equals a year served in the Virginia United Methodist Conference in a full time Episcopal Appointment where the salary paying unit was contributing towards the Active Clergy Health Plan apportionment.
3. Years of service in other United Methodist conferences are not qualifying years of credit toward eligibility for the Virginia Conference Retired Clergy Health Plan.
4. Retired Clergy and Diaconal Ministers who were participating in the Virginia United Methodist Conference Retired Clergy Health Plan, as well as those active clergy who had met the Retired Clergy Health Plan eligibility criteria on or before January 1, 2004, are considered vested with 30+ total years of credit. Therefore they are eligible to enroll in the Retired Clergy Health Plan with personal contributions according to the 30+ total years of credit contribution rate.
5. Eligible dependents are those who were eligible for coverage at the time of the participant's date of retirement.
6. Retired clergy and/or their dependents that are participating in the Retired Clergy Health Plan must file for and enroll in Medicare Parts A and B as soon as they become eligible in order to receive and continue their health benefits under the Retired Clergy Health Plan.

The Retired Clergy Health Plan is administered by VUMPI. The plan is primarily funded by Conference resources through apportionments and contributions from plan participants. The continuation of this plan depends largely upon the ongoing ability of the Virginia Conference to finance the plan benefits. Plan design changes and participant contributions are recommended for Annual Conference approval. Due to ongoing increases in general health care costs, it should be expected that VUMPI will periodically recommend increases in the Retired Clergy Health Plan apportionment and personal contributions. Similarly, reductions in plan benefits may be recommended in order to reduce the overall cost of the Retired Clergy Health Plan. The adoption of the Retired Clergy Health Plan is not considered binding upon the Conference for more than one year at a time.

Eligible retirees who wish to enroll in the Retired Clergy Health Plan may enroll either through VUMPI or directly with the insurer administering the health plan for Medicare-eligible retirees, depending on the Medicare eligibility status of the retiree. Prospective enrollees may contact VUMPI at either 804-521-1100 or 1-800-768-6040 for additional details regarding enrollment in the plan.

Summary plan descriptions and additional program details regarding the Retired Clergy Health Plan are available at [www.vumpi.org](http://www.vumpi.org).

### **Comprehensive Protection Plan**

The CPP is the denominational long term disability and life insurance program administered by Wespath. Program details are as follows:

The following are eligible for long term disability and death benefits through the CPP program, subject to the limitations and exclusions specified in that program:

1. Full time Elders, Deacons and Local Pastors with compensation of at least 25% of the Denominational Average Compensation
2. Elders and Deacons appointed to 75% appointments with compensation of at least 25% of the Denominational Average Compensation
3. Clergy on Medical Leave who were actively enrolled in CPP immediately prior to entering Medical Leave status may remain

enrolled in CPP at the Conference's expense for up to one year if not receiving disability benefits under CPP; clergy receiving disability benefits under CPP remain enrolled until disability benefits are terminated

4. Clergy on Sabbatical Leave or Voluntary Leave, or appointment to attend school, and who were actively enrolled in CPP immediately prior to taking the approved leave or appointment, are eligible to remain enrolled in CPP at the Conference's expense for up to one year

Continuation of CPP disability benefits is subject to ongoing evaluation of the recipient's medical condition and prognosis.

Retirees meeting certain eligibility requirements receive an ongoing CPP death benefit in retirement. To be eligible for death benefits in retirement, a clergy person must have been covered in CPP for a specified number of years. Retirees with 25 or more years of enrollment in CPP are automatically eligible for the death benefits in retirement, and the eligibility criteria for those with fewer than 25 years in CPP is phased in with one-year increments, as detailed in the table below:

<b>Retirement Year</b>	<b>CPP Enrollment Requirement for Death Benefit Eligibility</b>
2013	6 of last 10 years
2014	7 of last 10 years
2015	8 of last 11 years
2016	9 of last 12 years
2017	10 of last 13 years
2018	11 of last 14 years
2019+	12 of last 15 years

### **Supplemental Life Insurance Plan**

VUMPI administers a Supplemental Life Insurance Plan to augment the death benefits provided through CPP. The Supplemental Life Insurance Plan includes a supplemental death benefit for qualifying active and retired clergy, as well as a voluntary life insurance plan that is fully funded by the enrollee. Clergy eligible for and enrolled in CPP are eligible for the supplemental death benefit and the voluntary life insurance plan through the Supplemental Life Insurance Plan.

The supplemental death benefit for active clergy enrolled in CPP is \$25,000. This Conference Supplemental Death Benefit is payable in addition to the CPP death benefit. During retirement, a \$5,000 Conference Supplemental Death Benefit will be payable to retirees who are eligible for a CPP death benefit in retirement, in addition to the CPP death benefit.

The voluntary life insurance benefit available to active clergy enrolled in CPP is available in amounts from \$25,000 to \$300,000. The cost of the voluntary life insurance benefit is 100% participant paid, and is subject to underwriting. The voluntary coverage is portable for those enrollees who leave the ministry or retire. In addition, dependent life is available in amounts from \$10,000 to \$50,000 for spousal coverage, and from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for children.

VUMPI will automatically enroll those who are eligible for the CPP and Supplemental Life Insurance Plan. Those desiring to enroll in voluntary life insurance coverage can enroll during VUMPI's annual open enrollment in the 4th quarter of each calendar year. Unless otherwise elected by the participant, the beneficiary will always be the spouse.

Summary plan descriptions and additional program details regarding CPP are available at [www.wespath.org](http://www.wespath.org). Additional detail regarding the supplemental and voluntary life insurance programs is available at [www.vumpi.org](http://www.vumpi.org).

### **Denominational Pension and Savings Plans**

VUMPI assists with the administration of the denominational pension and savings plans, which are primarily administered by Wespath. The pension and savings plans include the following:

- Pre-1982 Plan: for years of ministry served prior to 1982
- Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP): for years of ministry served from 1982 through 2006
- Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP): for years of ministry served beginning in 2007 and thereafter
- United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP): an Internal Revenue Code section 403(b) retirement savings plan for clergy and lay employees of The United Methodist Church

## X. CONFERENCE RULES AND POLICIES

Participants are immediately vested in all denominational pension programs. The Pre-1982 Plan and the MPP are closed plans; no additional credit is being earned under the provisions of those plans. All clergy appointed at least 50% to a local church earn pension credit under CRSP, unless such credit is waived (clergy appointed less than full time may waive pension credit under CRSP). Clergy appointed to Extension Ministry appointments do not earn pension credit under CRSP.

Personal contributions toward a participant's UMPIP account can be made on a pre-tax, after-tax or Roth basis. Personal contributions are invested in the investment options selected by the participant.

Summary plan descriptions and additional program details regarding the denominational pension and savings programs are available at [www.wespath.org](http://www.wespath.org).

### **GIFT BENEFIT**

VUMPI currently elects to provide a one time \$1,500 gift at the time of retirement or disability (if awarded disability benefits under the Comprehensive Protection Plan) to each clergy person who has served at least ten years of service in a full time Virginia Annual Conference episcopal appointment in the Virginia Conference with pension credit. Further, a gift to the estate of each clergy person meeting the eligibility criteria above who dies in active service is paid in the same amount as the gift to retired or disabled clergypersons.

Benefits provided are subject to annual review. Therefore, the continuation of this plan depends largely upon the ability of the Conference to finance it. Benefits provided are approved at each Annual Conference. The adoption of this plan should not be considered binding upon the Conference for more than one year at a time. Accordingly, the terms of the Gift Benefit are subject to change by approval by Annual Conference.