



For the purpose of Rule Changes – delete the entire section in the current Journal dealing with Covenant Council and replace with the following:

The Covenant Council

The Purpose of Covenant Council:

1. To function as the steward of the vision of the Desert Southwest Conference.
 - a. The Vision of the Desert Southwest Conference: We are called to be a Courageous Church: loving like Jesus, acting for justice, united in hope.
 - b. The Core Values of the Desert Southwest Conference: trust, compassion, relationship, authenticity, boldness, and collaboration.
 - c. As our foundation the Desert Southwest Conference will be intentionally anti-racist, multicultural, and diverse in every way possible as we believe disciples of Christ are called to be in our understanding and living of scripture.
2. To be a vehicle for carrying out the directives established by Annual Conference.
3. To develop a long-term vision and strategy for implementation of the vision for the Desert Southwest Conference.
4. To assist in the development of outcome-oriented priorities that will enable local ministry settings and conference committees to live into the vision of the annual conference.
5. To provide a holistic process whereby all parts of the Annual Conference focus on being together in ministry. The Covenant Council is a common table where we may mutually discern Christ's call to ministry.
6. The Covenant Council may also conduct the business of the Annual Conference between sessions of the Annual Conference.

The Function of Covenant Council:

The function of the Covenant Council is to strategize for the long-term vision and its implementation by identifying quadrennial values-based priorities. The priorities, once identified, will be given to the Connectional Ministry Team as guidance for the various ministry settings within the conference to fulfill.

Covenant Council may benefit by periodically inviting representatives from conference committees not represented on the council or other individuals for consultation purposes.

Meetings:

The Council would meet regularly. Additional meetings may be called as needed. Sample meeting concepts might include:

- First meeting after the June session of the annual conference (August)
 - Election of a Vice-Chair and Secretary for the work of the Covenant Council.
 - Clarify the vision and values of the annual conference session.
 - Discernment and development of priorities that will assist the vision to become reality.

- Second meeting (November)
 - Engage in budget discussion, provide input for Council on Finance and Administration as needed to encourage alignment of resources with the vision and priorities.
 - Assist in identifying resources needed to support engagement with the named priorities.
 - Continue the work of implementation.
- Third meeting (February)
 - Reflect and assess progress made in engaging with the named priorities.
 - Begin the process of determining enhancements or changes needed in priorities for the next year.
- Fourth Meeting (May)
 - Strategize for the long-term vision and its implementation to present to Annual Conference.

The Membership of Covenant Council:

The membership of Covenant Council will consist of **one representative from the ministry areas listed below**. Each ministry area shall nominate their own representative. The representatives shall then be approved by a vote of the Annual Conference Session.

Council Chairperson (votes to resolve a tie)
 Conference Lay Leader
 Lay Ministries Board
 Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM)
 Committee on Status and Role of Women (COSROW)
 New Faith Committee
 Vital Faith Committee
 Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (BHECM)
 Camp and Retreat Ministries (CRM)
 Conference Board of Global Ministries
 Conference Board of Church & Society
 Commission on Religion and Race (CORR)
 Ethnic Local Church Concerns (ELCC)
 Race Coalition
 Reconciling Ministries
 United Methodist Men
 United Methodist Women
 Youth & Young Adult Ministries

Membership Notes:

1. The Chair of Covenant Council shall be nominated by the Clergy & Lay Leader Development Team and voted on by the Annual Conference. The term of office shall be for one quadrennium. A Vice-Chair and Secretary will be selected annually by the Covenant Council at their first meeting following Annual Conference.
2. Every Committee represented on Covenant Council will be tasked with identifying representatives who will enhance the diversity of the Covenant Council. It is no longer assumed that the chairperson of a committee will sit on Covenant Council. And it is no longer believed that the full weight of diversity rests on CORR and ELCC. It takes all of us to make a difference. Diversity includes many measures. The Covenant Council or its represented committees may consult with the Conference Clergy and Lay Leadership Development Team for assessment and guidance in the work of increasing diversity.
3. Covenant Council also recognizes the need to enhance the inclusion of under-represented groups of people. For this reason, the Council will also include five at-large members selected by the Conference Clergy & Lay Leader Development Team to enhance diversity.
4. The following persons will be present with voice and without vote: The Bishop, one District Superintendent, the Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer, the Director of New/Vital Faith, the Director of Communications, the Chair of the Connectional Ministry Team or the Director of Connectional Ministries, the Director of Camp and Retreat Ministries, and the Director of Outreach Ministries.
5. The Chair of Covenant Council and the Resident Bishop shall consult with one another in preparation for each meeting of the Council.

This Rule Change was discussed and voted upon by the Covenant Council on February 18, 2021.