Conference Rules, Policies and Guidelines

A. CONFERENCE RULES

Groups requesting changes in the Conference Rules are asked to send the proposed changes to the Conference Secretary by February 28 of each year. Rules III.M. and III.N. require that all rule changes must be submitted to the Rules Committee for consideration and presentation to the Annual Conference. Proposed changes shall be sent to the Conference Secretary who will send copies to the members of the Rules Committee within two weeks.

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

A. The organization of the Annual Conference shall be in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 603.

B. The composition and character of the Annual Conference shall be in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 602.

C. The powers and duties of the Annual Conference shall be in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 604.

D. The business of the Annual Conference shall be in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 605.

E. Roberts Rules of Order (Current Edition) shall govern all matters not specifically covered by the following special conference rules.

II. CONFERENCE PROCEDURES

A. Conference Secretary

1. The Conference Secretary shall be nominated by the Bishop after consultation with the District Superintendents. (S)he shall be elected at the first Annual Conference following General Conference and shall serve for the Quadrennium.
2. The Conference Secretary will prepare all of the proceedings of Annual Conference in electronic form and transfer them to the Conference Communications Department where Communications Staff will perform the final editing of the Journal. In cases where the Daily Proceedings are not approved by the Conference, the Secretary shall edit the Daily Proceedings from recordings; such editing shall constitute approval.
3. The Conference Secretary shall be authorized to edit the Preliminary Reports for each session of the Annual Conference for accuracy and brevity.
4. The Conference Secretary shall be authorized to reproduce the Daily Proceedings, as well as other reports and resolutions to come before the Annual Conference. The Daily Proceedings will be posted on the Conference web site at the conclusion of the last Annual Conference Session. In addition, the Secretary shall reproduce only such resolutions and reports which are the property of the Annual Conference or may be authorized by the Annual Conference. All preliminary minutes and recordings by the Conference staff of the Sessions are the property of the Conference Secretary and as such are part of the official proceedings. The Members of the Annual Conference will have 15 days to notify the Conference Secretary of changes that may be made.
5. The Conference Secretary's Staff for each Annual Conference will be listed in the Preliminary Reports for each session of the Annual Conference. These people will constitute the staff for that Annual Conference.

B. Conference Statistician

1. The Conference Statistician shall be nominated by the Conference Nominating Committee, elected at the first annual conference following General Conference, and serve for the Quadrennium.
2. The Conference Statistician shall gather data from the churches, boards, and agencies of the Annual Conference and shall prepare statistical reports and analyses for publication in the Journal or at the request of the stated boards and agencies in cooperation with the Appointive Cabinet.

C. Annual Conference

1. The names of the people who have registered for an Annual Conference will constitute the official roll call for that Session of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference.
2. Clergy who have requested to be excused from an Annual Conference and have received permission from their District Superintendent will be excused and their names be included in the minutes. If a person wishes to challenge an excused absence they may bring it to the attention of the Annual Conference.
3. The entire floor of the room where Annual Conference is held will constitute the Official Bar of the Conference and Annual Conference will operate under the "trust" system which means that: only eligible voting members of the Annual Conference may vote.

4. The Commission on Religion and Race and Commission on Status & Role of Women have a disciplinary responsibility to monitor the proceedings of the Annual Conference. Our leadership affirms our conference's desire to have them do so. Monitors will sit on the floor of each Annual Conference to observe the proceedings and they will be granted time in the agenda to report to the Annual Conference Session.
5. The Conference Secretary and Journal Editor are authorized to publish all Annual Conference reports and official materials not acted upon, with full editorial privileges.

D. Preliminary Reports

1. A Statement of Accomplishments may constitute a report from each board, commission, committee or agency. This statement may include Objective and Goals, Scope of the Charge Approach and Accomplishments, Budget Reports, Problems Encountered and Recommendations.
2. All written reports from boards, commissions, or agencies shall be in the hands of the Conference Secretary no later than April 30 in order to be included in Preliminary Reports. The reports should be submitted via email to the Conference Secretary's email address. In addition, the Conference Secretary shall provide those who are compiling reports a time line when reports are due. No report shall be published in the Preliminary Reports which has not been acted upon by a majority of the members of the committee.
3. All written reports presented to the Annual Conference for adoption shall be prepared based on the template provided on the Conference web site.
4. No regular report from a Standing Committee shall be before the Annual Conference for adoption unless it has been in the hands of the Annual Conference delegates not later than the close of the business session the day preceding its presentation for consideration. The exceptions to this rule are the Daily Proceedings for the last day of Annual Conference which may be considered with less than 24 hours' notice.
5. The Conference Secretary shall be authorized to edit and publish a supplemental edition of the Preliminary reports which shall contain the summary of the recommendation of the petitions.
6. Both Preliminary Reports and supplemental reports shall be considered preliminary in nature, and the local churches are at liberty to discuss the contents. However, Judicial Council Ruling No. 109 prohibits any official body of the local church to order or instruct lay or reserve members to vote in any prescribed manner on issues expected to come before the Annual Conference.

E. Petitions, Resolutions, and Rules

There are three processes in which matters may be brought to the attention of the Annual Conference for action. The Petition process is designed to be used by individual United Methodists and Local Churches. Through this process any concerned United Methodist or Local Church may petition the Conference regarding a concern which is within the Conference's Disciplinary power to act. The Resolution process is designed to be used by Conference Members, Boards, Committees, and Agencies who are directly related to the Annual Conference. Rule changes are ordinarily generated by the Board, Committee or Agency directly affected by the change. However, individual United Methodists, Conference members or churches may suggest rule changes by following the procedure outlined below.

1. **Petitions**
   - **a.** Any Local Church or United Methodist lay person who is an active member of a Local Church within the bounds of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference may petition the Annual Conference by sending a signed petition to the Conference Secretary stating the local church in which the signer is a member. No board, commission, or agency of the Annual Conference may submit a petition. Each petition shall meet the following requirements:
     1) The petition shall be supplied to the Conference Secretary not later than February 28 of each year. The petition should address only one (1) subject and be related to only one board, commission, or agency.
     2) All petitions received by February 28 shall be referred by the Conference Secretary to the board, commission, or agency which is determined to be most closely related to the content of the petition.
   - **b.** Each board, commission, or agency to which petitions have been referred shall report its recommendations to the Annual Conference at the time to be assigned by the Sessions Committee. If such a petition is not acted upon by the Annual Conference, it shall be considered null and void.
   - **c.** Each board, commission, and agency shall be responsible for reporting the final disposition of each

petition assigned to the Conference Secretary. This report shall be included in the Journal each year.

2. **Resolutions**
   - **a.** Any board, commission, agency, or five members of the Annual Conference acting together may present a resolution to the Annual Conference for its consideration provided it meets the Conference Rules as prescribed in rule III.D. Resolutions submitted by at least five members of the Annual Conference shall be signed by the Conference members with their names typed or legibly printed below the corresponding signature.
   - **b.** If a resolution is presented to the Conference Secretary prior to the April 30 deadline it will be included in the preliminary report.
3. **Rule Changes**
   - **a.** Rule changes proposed by Conference boards, commissions, or agencies must be received in the office of the Conference Secretary by February 28. The Conference Secretary will then forward proposed rule changes to the Rules Committee within two weeks.
   - **b.** Rule changes proposed by individual United Methodists, Conference members, or churches must be received in the Office of the Conference Secretary by February 28. The Conference Secretary shall then forward the proposed rule changes to the Conference boards, commissions, or agencies directly affected by the proposed rule changes for their consideration. If the affected Conference boards, commissions, or agencies concur with the proposed rule changes, then the procedures in item II.E.3.a. will be followed.
   - **c.** Proposed rule changes referred to a Conference board, commission or agency that do not receive a vote of concurrence will be considered null and void unless they are revived through the resolution process as described in II.E.2.
4. **General Conference Petitions**
   - **a.** Individuals and local churches can petition the General Conference by sending petitions directly. Those petitions are to be sent directly to the General Conference Petitions Secretary.
   - **b.** Petitions requesting the Desert Southwest Annual Conference to petition the General Conference shall follow the procedures and deadlines outlined in II.E.1.
   - **c.** Resolutions requesting the Desert Southwest Annual Conference to petition the General Conference shall follow the procedures and deadlines outlined in II.E.2.
   - **d.** Petitions to General Conference should address only one paragraph of the Discipline, unless two or more paragraphs in the Discipline are so closely related that a change in one affects the others. Resolutions should address only one issue.

F. Legislative Committees

During the Annual Conference session, there shall be not more than six Legislative Committees. The Conference Secretary in consultation with the Bishop shall determine if there is sufficient legislation to warrant the convening of Legislative Committees.

1. **Duties:** If Legislative Committees are utilized, their duties shall be as follows: to receive all items to be submitted to the Annual Conference for action, including but not limited to resolutions, recommendations, petitions, and proposals; to hear and consider all such items; to formulate, amend, vote to consent calendar and present action items to the Annual Conference. Those matters that shall be excluded from Legislative Committee consideration include, but are not limited to, Council on Finance & Administration recommendations and Nominations. The Bishop and Cabinet shall decide which matters need to be acted upon by the whole Annual Conference.
   - **a.** Assignments: The Conference Secretary is empowered to assign items for consideration to the appropriate Legislative Committee and to withdraw and reassign said items at any time before a report on said recommendations is submitted.
   - **b.** Amendments: The Legislative Committees are empowered to amend matters assigned to them.
   - **c.** Initiation of Resolutions: The Legislative Committees are empowered to initiate resolutions falling within the scope of their responsibility.
2. **Membership**
   - **a.** Assignment: Lay and clergy members will be given priority as to the legislative committee on which they wish to serve. Each Exempt Level I staff person will be assigned to a separate committee so far as possible.

b. Alternates and Observers: Alternates and Observers to Annual Conference may attend the Legislative Committee of their choice. Observers have the right of voice but not vote. Alternates have the right of voice but not vote unless they are filling the vacancy of the lay member.

c. Tenure: Assignment shall be made annually for one year.

3. Leadership

a. The Bishop and District Superintendents shall select a Convener and a Recorder for each Legislative Committee. The Convener shall facilitate the Legislative Committee. The Recorder shall keep minutes of the Legislative Committees. Care shall be taken in these nominations to alternate between lay and clergy persons.

b. Tenure: The term for Convener and Recorder shall be for one year.

4. Meetings

a. The Convener shall convene at Annual Conference the Legislative Committee at the prescribed times at Annual Conference.

b. An Exempt Level 1 staff person may act as the parliamentarian.

c. The Convener, at the first meeting of the Legislative Committee, shall explain the legislative committee process. Input will be given with discussion and debate on each matter on the legislative calendar.

d. Votes on each matter shall be reported as number voting for, number voting against and percentages.

e. Funding of Proposals: Any matters requiring additional funding shall be referred to the Council on Finance and Administration for review and report to the Annual Conference prior to its action.

f. Subcommittees: Each Legislative Committee may elect sub-committees by whatever method it chooses to deal with matters that are before them.

g. Process: Following discussion and debate, votes will be taken on each matter on the agenda.

1) If an item passes by 2/3 of those voting, it shall be placed on the Consent calendar to be reported at the next Plenary Session.
2) Those items receiving a simple majority shall be reported out of the committee and dealt with in a session of the total membership of the Annual Conference.
3) Those matters debated and amended by a 2/3 majority vote of the Legislative Committee shall be placed on the Consent Calendar and reported at a Plenary Session.
4) Nonconcurrence shall be reported on all matters not receiving a simple majority. In order for a matter receiving nonconcurrence to be brought before the Conference, the resolution process in II.E.2. must be followed.
5) Legislative committees which have not completed their work in the time allotted to them in the Conference program may call such additional subcommittee or full committee meetings as are necessary when not in conflict with scheduled plenary sessions of the Conference.

G. Financial Procedures

1. Any authorized Conference Board, Commission, or Committee finding it necessary to incur any indebtedness not provided in its regular budgeted sources of income shall first submit such proposal to the Council on Finance and Administration and obtain its permission before incurring indebtedness.

2. Every ministerial member of the Conference shall file a statement of the items paid to or for him/her by his/her employer, including allowances for expenses, with the Conference Treasurer on an annual basis. Such information shall be supplemented by a record of payments made from any Conference or General Board source. The entire summary compensation schedule shall be published in the Conference Journal.

3. The figure reported by the local church to the Annual Conference shown in Financial Reports shall include:

a. Cash salary payments to the minister including all variants and allowances.

b. The dollar amount of all employee benefits paid by the church for the account of the minister.

c. Direct expense reimbursements for costs incurred by the minister in performance of any professional duties, housing allowance and utility costs.

4. The District Superintendent shall provide the Conference Secretary with the estimated salary, travel, utilities, employee benefits, equitable salary variants, if any, and housing allowance (if a parsonage is not furnished) for each pastoral charge for the appointment year beginning July 1. This information to be printed following the pastoral appointments in the Conference Journal.

5. The salary and housing allowance of all full-time clergy Conference employees shall be published annually in the Journal.
6. Each local church is requested to include in its budget the amount required to provide the cost of registration, room and board during the Conference session for its ministerial and lay members to the Conference.

H. Conference Boards and Committees Travel Expense

1. Travel expense for members of Boards, Councils, Commissions and Committees elected by the Annual Conference to meetings of those bodies, for volunteer workers doing program or field work approved by such agencies, and for official representatives elected and/or designated by the agency to attend other than United Methodist meetings within the bounds of the Annual Conference may be reimbursed on a basis to be recommended annually by the Council on Finance and Administration.
2. All claims for expense shall be submitted to the Conference Treasurer and shall be approved by a person authorized by each agency before payment of the claim is made.
3. It is urged that in all cases those methods of travel be used which save the time and convenience of the member and at the same time represent the lowest expense to the Conference.

I. Moving Expense Plan

Clergy members of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference who are appointed with annuity claim and members of the professional staff employed by the Desert Southwest Annual Conference shall be entitled to receive reimbursement for moving expenses in accordance with the policies and procedures set forth below:

1. In case of clergy members, reimbursements by the Desert Southwest Annual Conference for costs incurred as the result of a change in appointment shall relate only to actual transportation costs of household goods and personal property unless otherwise authorized by the Moving Expense Committee of the Council on Finance and Administration.
2. The actual move must take place within twelve months from the date of appointment or the date of retirement in order to have any moving expenses paid by the Desert Southwest Annual Conference.
3. The Desert Southwest Annual Conference shall be responsible for 75% of the applicable moving costs within the Conference bounds. The remaining 25% shall be paid by the Church (or agency) receiving the clergy. Only actual transportation costs of normal household goods and personal property up to 16,000 pounds, full replacement insurance, packing materials and other standard incidental costs are recoverable expenses. Travel expenses are not covered.
4. Any clergy coming to an appointment in the Desert Southwest Conference from outside its bounds will have 25% of the prior year's average costs paid by the church (or agency) receiving the clergy, and the balance paid by the Desert Southwest Annual Conference.
5. Those clergy who are completing basic seminary education necessary for ordination and who are returning from schools outside the Desert Southwest Conference are entitled to moving expenses to their first appointment following school at the expense of 75% Desert Southwest Annual Conference and 25% to the receiving local church.
6. Clergy entering retirement who are currently serving in the bounds of, and have annuity claim upon, the Desert Southwest Annual Conference, and spouses and/or surviving minor children of clergy serving with annuity claim upon the Desert Southwest Annual Conference at the time of death, shall be entitled to one move within the geographical bounds of this Annual Conference. If the move is to go beyond the Conference's geographical bounds, the Desert Southwest Annual Conference shall pay for the move less that portion of the transport cost for mileage beyond the geographical bounds of the Conference. Clergy retiring with less than 20 years of service (*Book of Discipline*, ¶ 357.2) will receive coverage for their retirement move on a pro-rated basis equal to their number of years of service divided by 20. It is understood that in order to qualify for this move, the prospective recipient must be eligible for Pension Benefits in the year in which he/she retires.
7. Clergy who are Desert Southwest Annual Conference members returning from sabbatical leave or other additional continuing education outside the Desert Southwest Annual Conference will have their costs paid to their new charge from the geographical bounds of the Conference closest to the point of origin, at the expense of 75% Desert Southwest Annual Conference and 25% to the receiving local church on a prorated basis (75/25) as with other moves.
8. Persons employed as exempt staff of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference shall be reimbursed for

moving costs relating to their relocation at the time of their employment or appointment (ministers) in the Desert Southwest Annual Conference. The 25% portion of their reimbursement shall be charged to the employing agency budget.

9. Moving expenses related to Appointments Beyond the Local Church not covered in above paragraph # one (1) shall be paid by the employer/agency.

10. Clergy moving to a new church may incur reportable taxable income for reimbursed or paid for moving expenses. They are encouraged to consult with their tax advisor about the taxability of moving expenses paid to or for them.

11. In a case where storage of household merchandise would be needed, prior approval must be received from the Conference Treasurer's office. A maximum of 15 days is acceptable and could be reimbursable due to extenuating circumstances. Storage expense is to be paid 100% by clergy if caused by clergy action. Expenses are to be borne in like ratio II.I.5., if caused by the church or this Annual Conference.

12. All moves are to be coordinated through the Desert Southwest Annual Conference Treasurer's office. For convenience and control, a corporate central billing procedure will be provided.

13. Any clergy coming to an appointment in the Desert Southwest Conference from outside its bounds must reimburse the Conference and the receiving Church a pro-rated portion of the moving costs paid for/to the clergy person if they leave the Conference appointment within the first 3 years of their appointment in the Conference. The pro-rated reimbursement amount shall be as follows:

- 100% if they leave the Conference within the first year of their Conference appointment.
- 67% if they leave the Conference within the second year of their Conference appointment.
- 33% if they leave the Conference within the third year of their Conference appointment.

14. Exceptions to the provisions of these rules shall be subject to the final approval of the Appointive Cabinet with such approval being ratified by the Moving Expense Committee Chairperson and/or the Conference Treasurer in advance of the move.

J. Election of Lay Members and Observers

1. Annual Conference Lay Membership and method of election shall be in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*, ¶¶ 32, 602.4, and 602.5. Lay Members shall be elected on a quadrennial basis. The two persons specified under 25 years of age shall consist of one youth (Jr. High or Sr. High) and one young adult (age 19 through 30) to be selected annually by their respective District Youth and Young Adult organizations.

2. To reach the required number of Lay Members in equalizing membership (lay and clergy) the following priority basis shall be implemented until the number of Lay Members equals the number of clergy as defined in ¶ 602.4 of the *Book of Discipline*.

a. Conference Officers and Staff: Secretary, Treasurer, Statistician, Foundation Director, Director of Connectional Ministries, Director of New and Vital Faith Communities, Director of Camp and Retreat Ministries, Director of Outreach, Director of Communications, and Conference Chancellor (if any of the foregoing are laypersons).

b. Each District Conference shall elect annually two (2) lay members to Annual Conference, one of whom shall be of High School or Junior High school age (18 or younger) and nominated by the District Council on Youth Ministry, and one (1) of whom shall be a Young Adult (age 19-30) who shall be nominated by their District Young Adult Organization. Certification of their election shall be through a manner similar to the certification of other Lay Members of the Conference, except that it shall be through the office of the District Superintendent rather than a local church.

Each year the number of youth or young adults used for the purpose of representing youth and young adults from each district varies. In some years one might have more youth/young adults who would want to attend while another district might not have their allotted share of youth/young adults. In order to make sure that our youth/young adults have their fair representation in the Clergy/Laity Equalization formula, the Conference Youth Council can designate a youth/young adult to fill an empty district spot with someone from another district to serve as a lay member to Annual Conference. In addition to the 2 lay members (1 youth and 1 young adult), using the same formula as above, up to 2 observers per district could be selected yearly. The funds to pay for these positions will not come from the Annual Conference but will come from 1/3 local church, 1/3 district, and 1/3 family. The names of Lay Members and Observers must be sent to the Conference Office by March 31.

c. Lay Chairpersons on all Conference Boards and Agencies and Executive Directors of all independent

Conference related agencies (if they are laypersons) such as urban ministry agencies.

d. Lay members of General and Jurisdictional Church Boards and Agencies.

e. Presidents of District United Methodist Women and Presidents of District United Methodist Men.

f. Each local church shall receive one additional lay member in descending order from the largest church in membership to the smallest in membership until equalization is reached.

3. The Secretary of the Annual Conference shall use as the basis for the ministerial membership of the Annual Conference the number of ministerial members as of December 31. The churches shall elect additional lay members on the basis of the number of members reported to the Annual Conference on December 31. These figures shall determine the number of lay and clergy members in the Annual Conference for the following year. The Conference Secretary and/or the Conference Statistician shall be responsible for providing the necessary information to the District Superintendents and all others who are eligible to elect lay members.

4. Observers

a. Clergymates - one Clergymate in each District shall be elected by the Clergymates of those Districts, by whatever means they deem advisable, to Lay Observer status in the Conference with the power to speak on the floor, and in addition, the four executive officers of the Clergymates shall be elected to said Lay Observer status for the year following their term of office.

b. Youth and Young Adult Observers - At all sessions of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference there shall be three (3) Youth Observers and three (3) Young Adult Observers sponsored by each district with the privilege of being seated on the floor and the right to speak from the floor without vote. Each youth and Young Adult Observers shall be responsible for their own funding, support either from their local church or respective Youth/Young Adult district or Conference level organizations or through their own means. The Youth Observers shall be elected by their District Youth Organizations, and the Young Adult Observers shall be elected by their District Young Adult Organization, except that in districts where such organizations do not exist the observers shall be selected by a method to be determined by the District Superintendent. Each Observer shall be a member of a United Methodist Church in this Conference. There shall not be more than one Youth Observer from any one church. The Observers shall reflect the ethnic and racial makeup of the district from which they come.

c. Fellowships and Newly Constituted Churches - Newly established local fellowships and certified congregations not yet eligible under the present Discipline, may send one Lay Observer to the Annual Conference session with the privilege of being seated on the floor and the right to speak from the floor without vote. The local church shall pay the Lay observer's costs to attend the Annual Conference.

K. Election of Delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences

1. The election shall be held in accordance with the *Book of Discipline* ¶¶ 13.2, 34, 35, 36, and 502.3.

2. Elections for delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences will be at the regular Annual Conference session held two calendar years prior to a regularly scheduled session of General Conference.

3. A lay person or group of lay persons who want to nominate someone must submit to the Conference Secretary, the name, address, district and local church and a resume of no more than 50 words describing his/her abilities, interest and involvement in the Church. Lay persons may nominate themselves by submitting the same information to the Conference Secretary. This nomination and resume needs to be in the hands of the Conference Secretary by April 30, to be included in the Preliminary Reports for each session of the Annual Conference. This does not preclude nominations from the floor of Annual Conference.

4. Voters shall vote for one delegate on each ballot and continue voting until all delegates are elected with more than 50% of the votes.

5. Write-in votes are valid at any time during the voting process. Persons whose names are written in must meet the requirements for election established in the *Book of Discipline*.

6. Where there are duplications of surnames among the persons for whom a vote is cast, the first and last name shall be written for those for whom the vote is intended.

7. If paper ballots are used for voting, only the official ballot form (provided by the Secretary of Conference) will be accepted by the tellers.

8. Ballots will be received from members who are seated within the legal limits of the Conference. All members who wish to exercise their franchise must be seated within the Bar of Conference at the time of

the election in which they wish to vote.

9. The Chief Teller and assistant tellers shall be appointed by the Conference Secretary. Insofar as possible, they shall be nonvoting persons attending the Annual Conference. They shall be instructed in the balloting and counting procedures before the first ballot is taken, including the necessity of confidentiality until the results are officially announced. Electronic voting methodologies may be used if appropriate.
10. As soon as the results of the ballot are tallied, the results shall be announced to the Conference in session. If the Conference is not in session, the results shall be announced to the Conference when it is next called to order.
11. The delegation's Head Delegate will be chosen between the first elected lay and clergy delegates by a vote of the Jurisdictional delegation (i.e., all delegates elected by the Desert Southwest Conference to both General and Jurisdictional Conference). In the case of a tie vote, the Head Delegate position will alternate between the first elected lay and clergy delegates based on the most previous General Conference's Head Delegate.

L. Annual Conference Nominations for Episcopal Election (*Book of Discipline*, ¶ 405.1)

1. Deciding Whether to Participate in the Nomination Process
   - **a.** In the calendar year preceding the year in which the Jurisdictional Conference meets, the Annual Conference shall ballot on this question, "Shall the Conference Secretary distribute forms for the nomination of Episcopal candidates to the lay and clergy members of next year's Annual Conference, provided there is to be an Episcopal election?" A majority of the valid ballots cast shall be sufficient to instruct the Conference Secretary.
   - **b.** It shall be the responsibility of the Conference Secretary to notify lay and clergy members of Annual Conference if there is to be an Episcopal nomination process.
2. Developing an Annual Conference Ballot
   - **a.** If forms are to be distributed at the beginning of the Quadrennial year, these procedures will be followed: The Conference Secretary shall devise and distribute through Conference newspaper and/or other channels a form containing this information: Each lay and clergy member of the Annual Conference Session is invited to list up to three (3) ministers he or she wishes the Annual Conference to nominate for Episcopal election. All ministers who are full members of any Annual Conference are eligible for nomination. Names must be received by the Conference Secretary no later than April 1.
   - **b.** Persons submitting names shall identify themselves including eligibility to nominate.
   - **c.** All ministers receiving thirty (30) or more nominations shall be notified by the Conference Secretary who shall:
     1) Secure their willingness to be listed on the ballot;
     2) Prepare an alphabetical list of willing nominees including name, age, sex, ethnicity, annual conference membership, and complete service record; and
     3) Report this list to the members of the Annual Conference during the opening session.
     4) Up to twenty-four (24) hours prior to the taking of the first ballots, names may be added to the list by petition bearing the signatures of thirty (30) or more lay and/or clergy members of the Annual Conference Session and accompanied by a signed statement of willingness of the candidate to be on the ballot.
3. Selection of Nominees for Episcopal Election
   - **a.** On every ballot, each lay and clergy member of the Annual Conference Session may vote for up to three (3) ministers. Any minister receiving a majority vote shall become a nominee of this Annual Conference for Episcopal election by the Jurisdictional Conference. Any nominee with less than thirty (30) votes shall be omitted from further ballots.
   - **b.** After a nomination or after any consecutive four ballots on which there is no such nomination the Annual Conference shall count vote on the following question before balloting again on names of potential nominees: "Shall the Annual Conference continue to ballot in order to nominate ministers for Episcopal election?" Balloting for nominees shall continue if one-third of those voting on this question support it.
   - **c.** The Annual Conference Secretary shall notify the Jurisdictional Conference Secretary of the results.

M. Nominations for General and Jurisdictional Boards

Because the Jurisdictional Nominating Committee is not bound by those nominated from each Annual

Conference, all names nominated from the Annual Conference are placed in a pool of names to be considered by the Jurisdictional Nominating Committee.

1. The Conference Committee of Nominations shall prepare a slate of nominees for General and Jurisdictional Boards and Agencies by gathering names from Conference Boards, local churches and individuals who wish to be nominated to include the delegates to General Conference who do not need to be elected (*Book of Discipline,* ¶ 705.1*b*).
2. A standard form used by the Jurisdictional Nominating Committee shall be used. That form shall be distributed by the Nominating Committee through Conference newspaper and other channels of communication such as the Coordinated Mailing. Special attention shall be given to the inclusion of clergywomen, youth, young adults, persons with a handicapping condition, and racial and ethnic minority persons in keeping with policies for general church agencies. Those Nominating forms shall be in the hands of the Nominating Committee by April 30.
3. The Committee on Nominations shall present the slate to the members of the Annual Conference Included for each nominee shall be a brief resume of no more than 50 words describing their abilities, interest and involvement in the Church. This slate and the resumes shall be sent to the Conference Secretary to be included in the Preliminary Reports for each session of the Annual Conference.
4. Additional nominations shall be received from the floor of Annual Conference.
5. One ballot shall be taken to prioritize the pool of names to be sent with the Jurisdictional Delegation to be used in the nominating process.

N. Clergy Vacation Policy

Each pastor under appointment to a local church is entitled to four weeks' vacation per appointment year, with schedule subject to approval of the local church Staff Parish Relations Committee. This vacation time is not related to the time of continuing education for ministry or professional development leave (see *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 350). Vacations shall be taken during the appointment year. Vacation time will not be accrued for succeeding years. Vacation pay is not permitted in lieu of vacation time not taken. In the case of clergy receiving a new appointment within the Conference, vacation privilege will be immediately available under the usual provisions, as though the clergy had already been in the appointment.

O. Conference Journal

All items to be included in the current year's Journal shall be received in the Conference Secretary's Office no later than July 1 of the same year.

P. Conference Required Data of Connected Ministries

All incorporated and unincorporated entities (local churches excluded) operating within the geographical bounds of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference and under the auspices of the United Methodist Church are required to submit the following minimum data to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration -- Administrative Services Office -- 1550 East Meadowbrook – Phoenix, AZ 85014:

1. A copy of the most current bylaws governing the operation of the entity, if incorporated;
2. A copy of the most current Articles of Incorporation, if incorporated.
3. Additionally, all such entities shall annually submit to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration:
   - **a.** A copy of the most current year-end balance sheet and operating statement;
   - **b.** A copy of the most current "annual audit" and/or "review" listing the accounting controls, segregation of duties and financial reporting processes;
   - **c.** Proof of bonding or other insurance coverage;
   - **d.** A copy of any changes made to the by-laws and/or Articles of Incorporation in the previous year.

The submission of this data is for informational purposes only and does not indicate an affiliate, corporate, fiduciary or other similar relationship.

III. RULES OF ORDER

A. When a vote is being taken, only members who are within the bar of the Conference shall be entitled to vote (see II.C.3.).

B. All motions must be reduced to writing at the request of the Presiding Officer or the Secretary of the Conference.

C. All motions which affect budgetary matters in any way shall be in the hands of the Conference in electronic form not later than the close of the plenary session the day prior to action. Motions made on the floor of the Conference which affect budgetary matters which have not been in the hands of the Conference in accordance with the foregoing shall not be acted upon until the next regular plenary session of this session of the Annual Conference.

D. Resolutions by individual members of the Annual Conference must be in the hands of the Conference Secretary by April 30; and must carry the signatures of at least five (5) members of the Annual Conference; however, the Annual Conference, may choose to consider specific urgent resolutions arising after the deadline by a simple majority.

E. All material for distribution on the floor of the Conference shall be distributed only by the Conference appointed ushers. All material distributed on the floor of the Conference shall be limited to that which is pending action of the Conference. Any other material which may be of special interest to the Conference but does not pertain to pending action may be placed in the display area or on the Conference app so that interested parties may review them. Individual members of the Conference who desire to have printed material distributed on the floor of the Conference shall submit such material, except resolutions, to the Conference Secretary, who shall be authorized to consider the same, and if approved, shall provide for its distribution or placement on the Conference app at the proper time. No nonmember or organization or institution unrelated to the Annual Conference shall be permitted to distribute printed or electronic material without prior consent of the Conference Sessions Committee. All material distributed on the floor of the Conference or on the Conference app shall contain the name of the individual or organization under whose responsibility it is distributed.

F. After recognition by the Presiding Officer, but prior to speaking, each Conference member shall identify himself/herself by name and church or other Conference affiliation.

G. No member shall speak on any question more than once until all who wish to do so have spoken. No member shall any member speak more than three (3) minutes, except by permission of the Conference. It shall be out of order to move the "previous question" until each side of a question before the house has had equal opportunity to be heard; the Presiding Officer will decide when this has occurred.

H. When a layperson serving a Board, Commission, Committee, or Society is not a member of the Conference, said layperson shall be entitled to the privilege of the floor without vote, on matters relating to the report of such Board, Commission, Committee or Society. Laypersons employed by the Conference as staff persons and laypersons serving as officers of the Conference shall be entitled to the privilege of the floor, without vote, unless they are otherwise entitled to vote.

I. The maker of the main motion or resolution shall have a maximum of three (3) minutes to close the discussion. This right shall not be forfeited by a motion ordering the "previous question" or to "lay on the table."

J. Order of Precedence of Motions

1. Undebatable (as though privileged)
   - **a.** Fix the time at which to adjourn
   - **b.** Adjourn
   - **c.** Take a recess
   - **d.** Raise a Question of Privilege
   - **e.** Call for the Orders of the Day
   - **f.** Raise a Point of Order
   - **g.** Lay on the Table
   - **h.** Previous Question (2/3 vote)
   - **i.** Limit or Extend Limits of Debate (2/3 vote)
   - **j.** Suspend the Rules (2/3 vote and specify exact rule)
2. Debatable
   - **a.** Postpone to a certain time
   - **b.** Commit or refer
   - **c.** Amend, (deletion, addition, substitution)
   - **d.** Postpone indefinitely
   - **e.** Main Motion

K. Consent Calendar

1. Nonamended matters:

a. All consent Calendars shall be posted and published by the next plenary session.

b. Those nonamended matters voted to the consent calendar by a Legislative Committee shall be presented at the next Plenary Session. The consent calendar shall be adopted by simple majority.

c. Any matter on the consent calendar can be removed by vote of 30 members of the Annual Conference.

d. Those matters that pertain to budgetary matters and nominations shall not be part of the consent calendar.

2. Amended matters:

a. Publication: Any amended matters shall be published to the membership in accordance with Rule III.D. amended matters from Legislative Committees become the main motion.

b. Those amended matters voted to the consent calendar by a Legislative Committee shall be presented at the next Plenary Session following distribution. The consent calendar shall be adopted by simple majority.

c. Any matter on the consent calendar can be removed by vote of 30 members of the Annual Conference.

d. Those matters that pertain to budgetary matters and nominations shall not be part of the consent calendar.

L. Action Matters from Legislative Committees

Any matter from Legislative Committees reporting a simple majority will be addressed at the scheduled time.

M. The Rules Committee shall be responsible for all Conference Rules. Each organization or agency in the Conference wishing to change its own rules shall submit those changes to the Rules Committee for its consideration and recommendation before action by the Annual Conference. Submissions shall be made in writing and refer explicitly to the rule to be changed (Journal page, exact and complete reference, line in the paragraph or subparagraph). Words to be deleted or added shall be exactly located in each line.

N. Whenever the Annual Conference adopts a change in the procedure of any Board, Commission, or Agency which necessitates a change in the existing rules, said Board Commission, Agency or Corporate Organization shall, during the session of the Annual Conference submit a copy of the necessary change in rules to the Rules Committee for presentation to the Annual Conference for final adoption.

O. The Rules Committee shall meet following the reception of proposed changes no later than the 15th of April of each year to examine the proposals submitted before February 28; and immediately after reception for those proposals that are made during the session of the Annual Conference. The Rules Committee shall recommend 1) Concurrence and Adoption, 2) Amendment and Adoption, 3) Nonconcurrence. Notification of the action of the Rules Committee shall be made without delay to the group having proposed the changes and to the Conference Secretary. The Rules Committee may take the initiative to propose changes or new rules and call the attention of the Annual Conference or Conference groups on points needing clarification.

P. Any of the above rules may be changed or amended in any session of the Annual Conference provided such changes or amendments are in the hands of the Conference in electronic form not later than the close of the business session of the day preceding their presentation for consideration.

IV. CONFERENCE BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND AGENCIES

Historically and theologically The United Methodist Church has had a commitment to ministry beyond the local church. This ministry includes 1) Organizations mandated by the *Book of Discipline*, and 2) Those mandated by the Annual Conference action. The membership, rules, budgets, and policies of those organizations are established and confirmed by the Annual Conference, and these groups are directly amenable to the Annual Conference.

A. COVENANT COUNCIL

1. Purpose:

a. To function as the steward of the vision of the Desert Southwest Conference.

1) The Vision of the Desert Southwest Conference: We are called to be a Courageous Church: loving like Jesus, acting for justice, united in hope.

2) The Core Values of the Desert Southwest Conference: trust, compassion, relationship, authenticity, boldness, and collaboration.

3) 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.

b. To be a vehicle for carrying out the directives established by Annual Conference.

c. To develop a long-term vision and strategy for implementation of the vision for the Desert Southwest Conference.

d. 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.

e. 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.

f. The Covenant Council may also conduct the business of the Annual Conference between sessions of the Annual Conference.

2. Function: 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.

3. Meetings: The Council will 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.

4. Membership: The membership of Covenant Council will consist of **one representative, who is not Conference Staff, 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.

a. Council Chairperson (votes to resolve a tie)

b. Conference Lay Leader

c. Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry (BHECM)

d. Board of Laity

e. Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM)

f. Camp and Retreat Ministries (CRM)

g. Commission on Religion and Race (CORR)

h. Commission on Status and Role of Women (COSROW)

i. Conference Board of Church & Society

j. Conference Board of Global Ministries

k. Ethnic Local Church Concerns (ELCC)

l. Health and Caring Committee

m. Race Coalition

n. Reconciling Ministries

o. United Methodist Men

p. United Methodist Women

q. New Faith Committee

r. Vital Faith Committee

s. Youth & Young Adult Ministries

5. Membership Notes:

a. 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.

b. 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 Commission on Religion and Race and Ethnic Local Church Concerns. 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.

c. Covenant Council also recognizes the need to enhance the inclusion of under-represented groups of people. For this reason, the Council will also include 5 at-large members selected by the Conference Clergy and Lay Leader Development Team to enhance diversity.

d. 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 Development, 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 & Justice.

e. The Chairperson of Covenant Council and the Resident Bishop shall consult with one another in preparation for each meeting of the Council.

B. ARCHIVES AND HISTORY, Commission on

1. There shall be a Commission on Archives and History which shall perform the duties prescribed in the *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 641. The membership shall consist of seven (7) persons elected annually.

2. The members of the General and Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History residing within the territory of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference shall be ex-officio members, not to be counted in the maximum membership.

3. Each local church in the Desert Southwest Annual Conference may have a church historian charged with the functions and responsibilities as described in the *Book of Discipline* ¶ 247.5*a*.

C. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION, Council on

1. Membership

The membership of the Council shall be elected in accordance with paragraph 612.2 of the *Book of Discipline*. There shall be at least ten (10) elected members.

a. The Covenant Council may name one representative to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, with voice but without vote.

b. The Conference Board of Trustees shall name one of its members to serve on the Council on Finance and Administration with voice but no vote.

2. Organization of the Council

a. The Council on Finance and Administration, at the first meeting following the quadrennial elections, shall organize according to the provisions of the *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 612.2,.5.

b. The Conference Treasurer shall be chosen in keeping with ¶ 619 of the *Book of Discipline*.

c. The only standing committee will be the Executive Committee (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and current task force chairpersons). Other committee functions will be performed by the use of task forces.

3. Responsibilities

a. Budget recommendations to Annual Conference:

1) The Council shall make a diligent effort to secure full information regarding all Conference interests, that none may be neglected, jeopardized, or excluded. The Council may hold Budget Hearings, at which time all boards and agencies which report directly to the Council shall be invited to appear to make requests and hear the other presentations. Such hearings may be open to any interested persons. The Covenant Council may study and coordinate the budget requests of the

Conference agencies as they relate to the Conference programs and shall make recommendations regarding the same to the Council on Finance and Administration.

2) After the Budget Hearings, the Council may adopt and recommend to the Annual Conference budgets and procedures to secure such interests; insofar as, in their judgments, the funds are available or may be raised. These proposed budget(s) shall be sent to the various committees and agencies as soon as possible. They shall also be published in the Journal Preliminary Reports for each session of the Annual Conference.

3) The Council shall recommend to the Annual Conference the following:
   a) The Leadership and Support Budgets
   b) The World Service and Conference Benevolence Budget
   c) The General Church apportionments for Ministerial Education, Black College Fund, and Africa University
   d) The goals for Christian Education Sunday, Human Relations Day, Youth Service Fund, United Methodist Student Day, and such others as may be necessary.
   e) The projects which shall receive the offerings taken during the Annual Conference sessions on recommendation of the Bishop and the Extended Cabinet.

b. All earnings received from invested pooled general monies of Annual Conference are to be credited to the Contingency Reserve Fund of the Annual Conference. This is to be reflected in the budget askings of the Contingency/Reserve Fund by the Council on Finance and Administration.

c. The Council shall be responsible for oversight of the office of the Conference Treasurer and Statistician in consultation with the Appointive Cabinet. It shall provide for an annual audit of the Conference financial statements.

d. The Conference Treasury, under the direction of the Council on Finance and Administration, shall be constituted a depository for funds designated for all Conference Boards, Councils, Commissions, and Agencies participating in the Conference budget. Unless otherwise provided in the *Book of Discipline*, the person serving as Conference Treasurer shall serve as Treasurer of each Conference Benevolence budget (*Book of Discipline*, ¶¶ 614.3 and 619.1*a* (1,2). In cases where the *Book of Discipline* requires that a treasurer be elected by a Conference Board, etc. participating in the Conference budget, the Board, etc. will elect as its treasurer the person serving as Conference Treasurer.

e. Apportionments and Conference Budget Procedures

1) In relation to the various causes for which financial amounts are assigned to the local church the following terminology shall be used: Apportionments shall refer to the amounts assigned to the local church for:
   a) The Leadership and Support Budgets
   b) The World Service and Conference Benevolences Budget
   c) The General Church Apportionments for Ministerial Education, Black College Fund, and Africa University
   d) Special Sunday Goals shall refer to amounts assigned to the local church for special day offerings and all other causes for which a budget or goal is adopted by the Annual Conference. All apportionments and goals assigned to the local church shall (unless otherwise determined) be based upon the Grade Figure process.

2) After the Conference Budget has been adopted by the Annual Conference, the Council shall assign the amount to the churches.

4. Grade Figure Formula

The apportionment for each church shall be based on the following factors:

a. One-fifth of the apportionment shall be in proportion to the membership of the church as compared to the total Conference church membership.

b. Four-fifths of the apportionment shall be in proportion to the total church expenditure reported on Table II, Annual Statistical Report. Excluded from these expenditures shall be all benevolences and apportionments paid, capital asset expenditures, debt service payments including interest payments on such debt, and all rental or lease payments made for worship, education and office space facilities.

c. Prior to the determination of the grade figure decimal, there shall be deducted from the net church expenditure, as computed in 4.b. above, an amount equal to the Conference Average Compensation as

calculated by Wespath Benefits and Investments . This deduction shall be applied only in those instances where the church paid at least 100% of such Conference Average Compensation to its Senior Pastor. In the event a church pays a lesser amount than said Conference Average Compensation, the deduction shall be the amount paid.

d. In special cases where inequities may occur, the District Superintendents may propose to the Council on Finance & Administration (CF&A) adjustments to the calculated apportionments through consultation with the senior pastors and appropriate leaders of any churches whose apportionments may be changed. By August 31, the CF&A shall approve any changes in calculated apportionments. The District Superintendents or Treasurer shall communicate any apportionment changes to the senior pastors and leaders of churches whose apportionments have been adjusted.

e. A fellowship, or a church that has been chartered within the last five years, shall be subject to the following apportionment calculation procedure:

1) During the first and second year of operation, the fellowship or church shall adopt an apportionment amount in consultation with the District Superintendent.
2) In the third year of operation, the fellowship's or church's apportionment shall be 40 percent of the amount calculated according to the regular Grade Figure procedure, increasing to 60 percent in the fourth year of operation, and 80 percent in the fifth year of operation.
3) Beginning with the sixth year of operation, the fellowship's or church's apportionment shall be 100 percent of the amount calculated according to the regular Grade Figure procedure.

f. Apportionments for fellowships shall be in addition to the regular apportionment of the Conference budget to chartered churches.

5. Compensation and Expense Policies for District Superintendents and Other Level I Exempt Personnel

a. Compensation:

1) The Council on Finance and Administration shall annually recommend the compensation (cash compensation plus housing allowance and housing related allowances) of the Level I Exempt Personnel (hereinafter called Exempt Personnel) up to a maximum of 1.8 times the Conference Average Compensation as calculated by Wespath Benefits and Investments.
2) The Council on Finance and Administration may designate, after consulting with the individual Exempt Personnel, up to 100% of the compensation for housing and/or housing related allowances for Exempt Personnel living in other than conference owned property.
3) Health insurance plan premiums and the "employer share" of the pension payments are paid directly by the Conference Treasurer, but are included in the District Superintendent's or other applicable budget. The personal share of pension may be paid by the Conference Treasurer's office and deducted from salary.

b. Travel

Travel expenses shall be reimbursed as follows:

1) Actual miles driven at rate determined annually by the Council on Finance and Administration. A log shall be maintained giving date, mileage, and destination. Travel between home and office is not included.
2) Air fare and other necessary public transportation or car rental at lowest rate available
3) Hotel, to be used only if further than 50 miles from home.
4) Meals and tips, to a maximum per day, to be determined annually by the Council on Finance and Administration.
5) All expenses incurred by the District Superintendent in the performance of their duties in the superintendency or as a cabinet liaison are to be charged to the appropriate District Superintendent's budget.
6) Annual Conference room and board will be paid from the appropriate budget; spouse and family expenses are those of the Exempt Personnel.

c. Budget Restrictions

1) Monthly statements comparing actual expenses to budgeted figures will be provided to each District Superintendent or other applicable staff/volunteer by the Conference Treasurer. Care shall be taken to keep actual expense at or below the budgeted amount. Vouchers and backup must

reach the Conference Treasurer's Office by the end of the month to be included in that month's statement.

2) In the event a request for payment exceeds any annual budgeted area of expense, the Conference Treasurer is directed not to advance payment, except for salary-related items. An appeal for payment beyond the budgeted area of expense may be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Council on Finance and Administration for consideration.

3) In years when District Superintendents change, care should be taken to spend only 50% of budgeted items during the first six months of the year.

d. District Office Expense

1) Any Rent and Utilities for District office space shall be paid by the District Superintendents' Budget of the Annual Conference.

2) Office expenses to be budgeted as part of the Annual Conference expense shall include: Office Supplies, Printing and Copying, Postage, Equipment Rental and Maintenance, Depreciation and other normal operating expense.

3) The Annual Conference will pay salary and benefits for up to one support person. This staff person will be included under the Conference Personnel Policies. The Committee of District Superintendency or other appropriate district body may be utilized by the district superintendent as the local group responsible for the employment of support staff.

6. Conference Journal

a. If printed, the Council on Finance and Administration is authorized to pay from the Conference budget the cost of publishing and distributing the Conference Preliminary Reports and the Journal, plus any expense of the Conference Secretary incident to his or her work. The number of Journals to be printed shall be at the discretion of the Conference Secretary within the constraints of the Conference budget for this item. Journals may be produced in electronic form only.

b. The price of the journal shall be determined by the Conference Secretary in light of its actual cost each year. Each minister and lay member of the annual conference will have access to an electronic journal prepared by the Communications Department. In addition, each lay member of the Nominating Committee, each lay member of the Council on Finance and Administration, chairperson of any conference board or agency and lay member of the Rules Committee have access to an electronic journal. Anyone desiring a printed journal can print one at their own cost.

7. General Rules (See *Book of Discipline*, ¶¶ 610-619)

a. All matters pertaining to apportionments or goals to churches, or allocation from funds held by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, shall be submitted to the Council for its consideration and recommendation before action by the Conference.

b. Special Appeals (See *Book of Discipline*, ¶¶ 613.2 and 614.5) No Annual Conference Board or interest, such as a school, college, university, or hospital, may make a Conference-wide appeal to the local churches for funds without the approval of the Annual Conference except in case of an extreme emergency, which such approval may be given by two-thirds vote of the District Superintendents and the Council on Finance & Administration, acting jointly. When application is made to the conference for the privilege of a special conference-wide financial appeal, whether by special collections, campaigns, or otherwise, the application shall be referred to the council before final action is taken thereof. The council shall investigate the application and its possible relation to other obligations of the conference, and in the light of the facts make recommendations to the conference for its action and determination. Such application for privilege of a special appeal may be made directly to the council for recommendation to the Annual Conference.

c. It shall not be permissible for a Conference Board, Council or Commission which participates in the division of the Conference budget to increase its annual operating budget unless such an increase has been approved by the Council on Finance and Administration. Boards or Commissions related to the Covenant Council shall also obtain the consent of the Council before making requests to increase their operating budgets to the Council on Finance and Administration. Any adjustments contemplated to be made by transferring funds from one type of account to another within the budgets of Boards, Councils or Commissions shall not be made until after the Council on Finance and Administration has been consulted.

d. All Conference Boards, Committees and Agencies shall begin each year from a zero-budget. All reserves must be justified and approved by the Council on Finance and Administration.

e. It is expected that the budgets submitted by each Conference Board or Agency to the Council on Finance and Administration for the purpose of supporting a request for participation in the Conference budget shall include every item of income from the board or agency for the ensuing year.

f. All Boards and Agencies appearing as line items in the World Service and Conference Benevolence Budget and receiving funds through said budget shall submit annually an audited report concerning receipts and disbursements of their operations to the Council on Finance and Administration.

g. The Conference Council on Finance and Administration in consultation with the appropriate Conference agencies is hereby empowered to exercise its authority, when absolutely necessary, to restrict spending in such a manner as to avoid continued deficits when disbursements within a council, board, agency, or committee are projected to exceed anticipated income. These adjustments are to be reported to the next Annual Conference Session.

h. The Conference Council on Finance and Administration shall be given approval to borrow sufficient funds from outside sources to enable adequate funding of approved budgets during the fiscal year. Such indebtedness shall not exceed $500,000. Amounts borrowed, interest costs, and source will be reported to the next Annual Session of the Conference.

i. A local church or fellowship, or an organization approved as a conference advance or benevolence special, may directly solicit funds from another local church or fellowship or its members after receiving advance approval from the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CFA). The request for such approval must be made through the District Superintendent by the local church or fellowship, or the organization approved as a conference advance or benevolence special, making the request. The District Superintendent will forward the request to CFA with a recommendation. Local churches or fellowships may contribute to another local church or fellowship, or an organization approved as a conference advance or benevolence special, on an unsolicited basis without advance approval of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration.

D. CHRISTIAN UNITY AND INTERRELIGIOUS CONCERNS

E. EPISCOPACY

F. EQUITABLE COMPENSATION, Commission on

1. Membership

a. The Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation shall be organized in accordance with ¶ 625 of the *Book of Discipline*.

b. There shall be eight elected members.

c. There shall be one ex-officio member named by the Council on Finance and Administration, one named by the Board of Ordained Ministry and one District Superintendent named by the Bishop. These shall have both voice and vote.

d. The Treasurer of the Annual Conference shall be the Treasurer of this Commission.

2. The Equitable Compensation Schedule

a. All clergy members (as defined in ¶602.1 of the *Book of Discipline*) of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference appointed to the local church shall receive at least the minimum compensation according to the Schedule of Equitable Compensation adopted by the Desert Southwest Annual Conference. Unless otherwise eligible under the rules governing the distribution of the Equitable Compensation Fund, the pastoral charge or an agency of the Annual Conference shall be responsible for paying at least the minimum compensation established by the Schedule for each minister appointed to such charge or agency of the Annual Conference; provided that nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as limiting the maximum compensation and benefits which may be paid by a pastoral charge or agency of the Annual Conference to a ministry, "except those ministries receiving equitable salary support, which said ministries shall be paid in accordance with the Schedule of Equitable Compensation."

b. Deacons in Full Connection may be eligible for missional purposes. Further, the local church is not required to provide an additional housing allowance beyond the Schedule of Equitable Compensation for a Deacon in Full Connection. The local church in consultation with the Deacon in Full Connection may designate a portion of any compensation for a housing allowance.

c. The Equitable Compensation Schedule for the ensuing year may be based upon the Conference

Average Compensation as calculated by Wespath Benefits and Investments. "Cash Compensation" for such clergy, shall include items paid by the local church and designated as cash salary and other contributions, IRA contributions, deferred compensation plan, bonuses, personal contributions to pension plan, and all other elective benefits whether paid in cash or in kind by the local church. The entire Schedule of Equitable Compensation shall be recommended annually by the Commission and after adoption by the Annual Conference, shall be printed in the Journal in answer to Disciplinary Question No. 9.

d. The base minimum cash compensation paid to a minister shall not exceed 75% of the Conference Average Compensation (CAC) less 25% for housing. In addition, a tenure adjustment of 1.25% of the CAC less *25%* for housing will be added to the minimum cash compensation for each year of service up to 20 years.

e. In determining the number of service years used as the basis for the equitable compensation for a minister, only those years under appointment by a bishop, excluding those years to attend school, shall be counted. The number of service years credited as of June 30 (whether serving full or part-time) shall determine the Equitable Compensation level for the following fiscal year.

f. In addition to the minimum cash compensation (including the factor related to tenure), the local church will provide housing comparable to the housing standards of the local church community, by means of a parsonage or a housing allowance. If a housing allowance is provided, the amount shall be determined by the local church in consultation with the District Superintendent. If a parsonage is provided, it must meet the standards described in Conference Policy 0. G. CLERGY HOUSING POLICIES AND STANDARDS. Also, health insurance premiums, pension, utilities, professional expense, and continuing education shall be paid for elders, associate members, provisional members, and local pastors serving in the local church in accordance with the full schedule, as adopted by the Annual Conference. Deacons under the provisions of the *Book of Discipline* may receive housing and other benefits as negotiated with the local church.

3. The Equitable Compensation Fund

a. The Equitable Compensation Fund shall be limited to pastors-in-charge except where a parish has not been organized in which case equitable support can be used in an amount not to exceed the amount being received by any of the separate churches in the year that the parish is formed. It shall provide the difference between all other church sources of compensation and the minimum equitable compensation to which the minister is entitled, as defined in the Schedule of Equitable Compensation. No Equitable Compensation Funds shall be used to pay for any expenses other than cash salary, housing, business and transportation expenses, continuing education, health insurance, and pension.

b. Churches or charges whose pastors receive support from Equitable Compensation Funds shall make requests for such funds to the Commission through and with the approval of the District Superintendent. Churches receiving equitable compensation subsidies shall submit a completed finance and ministry report form provided by the Commission, together with the application for subsidy, to the Commission not later than November 1 each year.

c. The maximum amount which can be paid to a church from equitable compensation funds shall not exceed 75% of the minimum compensation including cash salary, housing, business and transportation expenses, continuing education, health insurance and pension.

d. Each year prior to submitting requests for Equitable Compensation Funds, the Appointive Cabinet shall review the needs of all the churches for which subsidies are requested, carefully considering the advisability of charges being merged or formed into circuits, served by part-time ministers, or cared for through other approaches in order to obtain maximum efficiency in the use of the Equitable Compensation Funds.

e. In order to receive equitable compensation subsidy a church will: Adopt annual goals that increase the local church portion of the pastoral compensation and decreases the equitable compensation subsidy; conduct an annual stewardship campaign; annually pay 100% of its apportionments; undergo a review of its ministry and equitable compensation needs conducted annually by the Equitable Compensation Commission in consultation with the Cabinet. These goals will be adopted by the charge conference in consultation with the local church, the appointed pastor, the superintendent and a representative of the commission.

f. Payment of monthly subsidies will be made by the Conference Treasurer, first to cover health insurance premiums, second to cover pension payments, and third any subsidy balance to the local church. A quarterly financial report will be provided *by the local church*, to the Committee on Equitable Compensation in order to continue to receive Equitable Compensation Funds.

g. It is the expectation that churches shall not receive equitable compensation subsidies for more than five consecutive years.

4. Mission Churches

The Annual Conference is committed to be in ministry with all people. Some of our churches have viable ministry within communities that struggle with isolation and cultural obstacles, socioeconomic challenges, languages and institutional racism and classism. The Appointive Cabinet in consultation with the Conference Board of Equitable Compensation may designate such churches as Mission Churches. Such designation shall be reviewed on an annual basis. Mission churches may be given special consideration regarding equitable compensation subsidies.

5. Exceptions

Exceptions to the Equitable Compensation rules require approval of both the Commission and the Appointive Cabinet.

G. FOUNDATION, Annual Conference

1. There shall be an Annual Conference Foundation incorporated under the laws of the State of Arizona and in accordance with ¶ 2513 of the *Book of Discipline*.

a. To provide the services as described in ¶ 2512.3 (*Book of Discipline*) as designated by the donors or at the direction of the Conference Board of Trustees.

b. To promote planned giving programs on behalf of local churches, the Annual Conference, and General Church Boards and Agencies.

c. To carry out other responsibilities as the Annual Conference determines.

2. Membership - There shall be not fewer than six (6) nor more than eighteen (18) who must be of legal age as determined by state law, elected by the Annual Conference for terms of four years. Their terms will be staggered so there are approximately an equal number of members in each class.

3. Officers - The officers of the Foundation shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. All officers shall be elected by the Board of Directors for terms of one (1) year and may succeed themselves.

H. Committee on Clergy and Lay Leadership

1. The Conference Committee on Clergy and Lay Leadership, elected annually by the Conference, shall include the following membership: one (1) representative from each District, either clergy or lay, nominated by each District for four-year terms; the Conference Lay Leader; the Conference United Methodist Women President (or her representative); the Conference United Methodist Men President (or his representative); the chairperson or designated representative of the Committee on Rules; the chairperson or designated representative of Commission on the Status and Role of Women; the chairperson or designated representative of the Commission on Religion and Race; one member of the Cabinet appointed by the Bishop; one representative of the Conference Council on Youth Ministries; and twelve (12) at-large members elected from the floor of the Annual Conference. At least one young adult will be among the total membership of the committee. Sensitivity to ethnic representation should be given within this structure, and due diligence should be applied to organizing the Committee on Nominations in accordance with the 4/3 guideline. The 4/3 guideline means (to the extent practicable) that 1/3 of the members are clergy, 1/3 of the members are laymen, 1/3 are laywomen; and 1/3 of the total membership is ethnic minority, youth, young adults, older adults, or persons with handicapping conditions. The Committee on Clergy and Lay Leadership shall nominate for election by the Conference the following: the directors, chairpersons, and trustees of all Conference groups including all boards, councils, commissions, agencies, and institutions whose nominations and/or selections of officers are not otherwise provided by the *Book of Discipline*, the rules of the Conference, the bylaws of a corporation, or the laws of a state.

2. All Boards and Agencies will have terms of four years, unless the Discipline stipulates otherwise (for instance eight years for the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, and quadrennium terms for the Board of Ordained Ministry (*Book of Discipline* ¶ 635.1), Committee on Episcopacy (*Book of Discipline* ¶ 637.1), Council on Finance and Administration (*Book of Discipline* ¶ 612.2). The membership of the Boards and

Agencies will be divided into yearly classes except the Council on Youth Ministry (Annual) and the Board of Pension and Health Benefits which will be biennial classes. The Council on Youth Ministries is elected annually. Each new four-year term shall begin at the close of the Annual Conference electing those persons; quadrennial terms shall begin at the close of the Annual Conference session following the General Conference. Service of one-half term or more in filling a vacancy of other than annual term shall be considered as a full term. The terms of those elected from the Districts shall begin upon their election. Their terms shall continue until their successors are elected. The District Nominating Committees shall include in their reports to the District Conference the year of election of members of all District groups to assist the Committee on Nominations in the monitoring of the tenure rule. Tenure on any Conference group shall be no more than two terms except for the Board of Pension and Health Benefits which will be one term.

Those who have completed tenure shall not be elected to additional terms with the same group until one (1) full term shall have elapsed, except that members of any General Conference group shall serve on the corresponding Annual Conference group as an ex-officio member with vote, unless otherwise provided by the *Book of Discipline*. None of the above shall limit any Conference or District groups whenever they have decided to establish shorter terms of service.

3. Insofar as possible, the membership on council, boards, and agencies of the Annual Conference shall include one-third clergy, one-third laywomen, and one-third laymen, except for the Board of Ordained Ministry. Special attention shall be given to the inclusion of clergywomen, youth, young adults, older adults, persons with a handicapping condition, and racial and ethnic minority persons in keeping with policies for general church agencies (*Book of Discipline*, ¶ 610.5).

4. The Committee on Nominations shall be empowered to fill vacancies created between Conference sessions in all groups unless otherwise provided by the Discipline or the Annual Conference rules. A vacancy in the Board of Trustees may be filled until the next Annual Conference by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining Trustees. If a member of a Conference group is absent for three (3) consecutive meetings or for one year, whichever is the lesser amount of time, without reason acceptable to the group, that group shall notify the member in question. The group shall remove the person in question from membership, and the vacancy shall be filled by the Committee on Nominations. This rule does not apply to ex-officio members.

5. No person shall serve on more than one Conference group at any given time, except as required by the structure of the Annual Conference and/or provided for in the *Book of Discipline* ¶¶ 906.1a & 710.5. This Rule does not apply to the Committee on Episcopacy, the Strategic Direction Committee, the Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns, and the Committee on Native American Ministries.

6. No person shall serve as chairperson of any Conference group for more than a total of four years during the term as a member of that group. The four years served as chairperson need not be consecutively served. No person shall chair more than one Conference group (or major subcommittee lasting more than one year) at any one time.

7. During the first Annual Conference following General Conference the Committee on Nominations shall nominate the Conference Secretary and the Conference Statistician for election for the succeeding quadrennium (*Book of Discipline*, ¶ 603.7).

8. Whenever any Conference group requires District representation, those nominations shall be submitted to the Committee on Nominations for compliance to the rules and guidelines regarding balance, one person/one position, and tenure by February 1 of every year, unless otherwise provided.

9. The lay leader candidates shall be nominated by the lay members of the annual conference without regard to age; provided candidates shall have been members of The United Methodist Church for at least two years next preceding their election, and shall have been active participants in the United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election, and are members thereof within the Annual Conference electing them.

- **a.** The Conference Lay Leader shall be elected in the same year as General Conference for a four-year term. (S)he may be re-elected one time for a total of eight consecutive years.
- **b.** Each candidate wishing to be included in pre-conference and annual conference introductions shall submit his/her candidacy on the form provided by the Conference Board of Laity.

  All candidate forms must be received or postmarked by February 28 to the Annual Conference. This

date ensures that a complete packet of resumes will be included in the Preliminary Reports for each session of the Annual Conference. No late candidate forms will be accepted.

c. The Conference Lay Leader nominated by majority vote at the Laity Session will be included in the Conference Nominating Committee Report to the Annual Conference Session.

10. All members of Conference groups shall fulfill their vows of membership in their local church as a requirement for nomination and/or retention of membership on District and Conference levels. (College students are a special case requiring individual evaluation.)

11. Persons who have been elected to serve on an Annual Conference board or agency who are elected to serve on a General Board or Agency will become members of the comparable Annual Conference group and resign their previously elected position.

I. ORDAINED MINISTRY, Board of

All persons having both completed candidacy studies and been certified for diaconal ministry, deacon's or elder's ordination and conference membership, or full-time local pastors prior to January 1, 1997, may be considered for ministry under the provisions of the *Book of Discipline*.

J. PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS, Board of

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) shall be governed in all matters by the *Book of Discipline*, the rules of the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), and the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) as administered and interpreted by Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath). In matters where significant options are permitted by the Annual Conference the Board shall make recommendations to the Annual Conference for its consideration and approval. The actions of the Annual Conference shall be included in the rules of the CBOPHB included in the Journal.

1. Clergy Retirement Security Program

a. All eligible clergy persons shall participate in this plan as defined by the CRSP Document.

b. The Church contribution to the Plan shall be payable each month to the CBOPHB and shall be a percentage of the active participant's plan compensation (cash salary plus housing allowance or parsonage provision) for a plan year, as established by the Annual Conference.

c. The obligation to make the church contribution on behalf of the active participant shall be as follows:

1) The local church if the active participant is serving a local church.
2) The applicable conference budget if the active participant is a district superintendent or a conference staff person.
3) The active participant's salary paying unit if the active participant is other than described in section 1 or 2, above.
4) The Board of Ordained Ministry or local church(es) (at its discretion) if the active participant is appointed to sabbatical leave or to attend school.

d. Any board, agency commission or conference organization which makes supplemental salary payments to a local church shall be obligated to pay the pro-rata share of the church contribution at the established rate for those payments which are a part of the active participant's plan compensation.

e. The CBOPHB shall have final authority in all matters related to IV.J.1.c. and IV.J.1.d., above.

2. Comprehensive Protection Plan

a. All eligible clergy persons shall participate in the Comprehensive Protection Plan.

b. The obligation to make the church contribution on behalf of the active participant shall be in accordance with the conference remittance (apportionment) option of CPP (i.e., the source of the church contribution shall be apportioned to the local churches as an item in the budget of the CBOPHB).

3. Past Service Obligation

The responsibility for all past service benefits payable in accordance with Supplement One of the MPP shall rest with Annual Conference and shall be the budget obligation of the CBOPHB.

4. Endowment and Trust Funds

The CBOPHB is the recipient of income and distributions from conference pension and health benefit funds invested at Wespath and the conference Foundation, and also the Frank and Georgia Lynch Trust Fund. The funds received by the CBOPHB from these sources shall be used for the pension and health benefits of conference claimants and participants upon the recommendation of the CBOPHB.

5. Notifications Related to Deaths

The CBOPHB or Episcopal Office shall notify all Conference members in case of the death of a Conference member, or any other person closely related to the Annual Conference.

6. **Health Insurance Plan; Eligibility and Participation**

   a. **GENERAL:**

   Health insurance benefits are an earned benefit of the clergy as members of the Conference. For purposes of the Conference Health Insurance Plan (Conference HIP) only, clergy members means those clergy under appointment in the Conference under the *Book of Discipline* ¶ 337.1. All other Conference HIP participants are considered non-clergy. Clergy members must demonstrate continued coverage in the Conference HIP in order to be eligible for Conference HIP subsidy at the time of retirement. Clergy members will be allowed 30 days to complete the enrollment process following their appointment date. Failure to complete the process within 30 days could require proof of insurability. Applications will be mailed from the CBOPHB upon request by letter or telephone.

   b. **ACTIVE CLERGY MEMBER PARTICIPATION:**

      1) Clergy members under appointment three-quarter time or full-time to a local church or staff position of the Conference, shall enroll in the Conference HIP unless they meet one of Wespath's permitted opt-out provisions.
      2) Coverage for clergy members on leave may be continued for a maximum of twelve (12) months provided acceptable arrangements for continued payment of premiums are made with the Conference Treasurer. Coverage after 12 months will only be provided if the clergy member is again under appointment.
      3) The Conference will pay for the church portion of all Conference HIP premiums for any clergy member who is on approved disability leave as defined by Wespath. Said premium coverage will also include the clergy member's spouse and dependents as applicable.

   c. **RETIREE ELIGIBILITY AND SUBSIDIES:**

      1) Retirement subsidy is provided if a clergy member is enrolled in the Conference HIP during his or her ministry in this Conference (or met one of Wespath's permitted opt-out provisions), and retires from this Conference and meets the other eligibility requirements. The amount of the subsidy for clergy retiring by 12/31/12 shall be $208 per person per month. The amount of the subsidy for clergy retiring after 12/31/12 shall be $5.55 for each year of active service in the ministry, up to a maximum subsidy of $208 per person per month.
      2) Conference HIP premium subsidy payments will only be paid by the Conference for those clergy members and their dependents active in the Conference HIP at the time of retirement, and who have a minimum of 20 years of active service in the ministry.
      3) The Conference HIP premium subsidy payments at retirement will be at a rate of 10% per year of active service within this Conference, up to the maximum subsidy for 10 or more years of Conference service, provided the retiree has 20 years or more of active service in the ministry.
      4) Clergy who have reached age 65 years of age and who have opted out of Social Security, will receive health insurance premium subsidy payments equal to the dollar amount of those participating in Medicare upon retirement, provided they have 20 years or more active service in the ministry.
      5) Clergy members retiring that are less than 65 years of age with at least 20 years of active service in the ministry will receive health insurance premium subsidies to be applied towards the Conference HIP, equal to the dollar amount of those participating in Medicare, provided at least 10 years of such active service were appointment years within the connectional structure of this Conference. Those clergy members retiring who are less than 65 years of age but with 35 years of active service or more in the ministry will be entitled to the same percentage of premium subsidy as those on Medicare subsidies.
      6) In order to be eligible for the Conference HIP Medicare Supplement/Medicare HMO coverage, the retiring clergy member must have 5 continuous years of participation in the Conference HIP immediately prior to retirement from the Conference (or have met one of Wespath's permitted opt-out provisions during that time).

   d. **SURVIVING SPOUSES AND DEPENDENTS:**

   Surviving spouses and dependents of active clergy members shall have full coverage provided by the

CBOPHB for 3 months. Before the expiration of the above-mentioned 3-month period, the surviving spouse and/or family will consult with the Executive Secretary of the CBOPHB, who may assist in arranging a form of health insurance coverage. At the end of the 3 months of full coverage, continuing coverage is available as follows:

1) If the surviving spouse has less than 30 years of shared ministry with the clergy member, he or she may participate in the Conference HIP by paying the full applicable premium.
2) If the surviving spouse has 30 years of shared ministry, the Conference will provide a 10% health insurance premium subsidy for continued participation in the Conference HIP.
3) If the surviving spouse has more than 30 years of shared ministry, the Conference will provide an additional 10% health insurance premium subsidy for each additional year of shared ministry up to a maximum of 100% subsidy for 39 or more years of shared ministry.
4) DIVORCED SPOUSES: So long as the Conference HIP is in force, coverage for a divorced spouse, with or without dependents, will be available at her or his own cost if continued coverage is required by legal decree. If continued coverage is not required by legal decree, the divorced spouse and dependents are no longer considered eligible dependents.
5) NON-CLERGY EMPLOYEES: While active or in retirement, non-clergy employees of local churches, conference agencies and staff within the Conference may participate in the Conference HIP pursuant to the terms of the applicable adoption agreement.

7. Additional Regulations about Health Insurance

a. For all clergy members and non-clergy participants in the Conference HIP whose paying unit is the local church, the premium is to be paid by the local church directly to the Conference Treasurer with the exception of those churches receiving equitable compensation or other subsidies. For those clergy members at churches receiving equitable compensation or other subsidies, the full premium is to be deducted from the subsidy by the Conference Treasurer if sufficient subsidy funds are available.

b. Cancellation by a clergy member or non-clergy participant of the health insurance coverage provided by the Conference HIP requires that notice be received by the Conference Treasurer's office not less than 30 days prior to the effective date of cancellation. All insurance cancellations are effective the first day of the first month that is at least 30 days after receipt of the notice. The local church sponsoring the participant is responsible for the notification and will be responsible for unpaid premiums.

c. When a participant becomes sixty (60) days in arrears with the Conference HIP premium, the policy for the participant may be cancelled by the plan sponsor.

d. The CBOPHB is authorized to use up to 3% of the premium payments for administrative purposes.

e. Exceptions to the rules governing the Conference HIP are not permitted unless recommended by the Cabinet and approved by the CBOPHB. The rules set forth in the Conference HIP, as provided through Wespath, take precedent over the rules set by the Conference and the CBOPHB.

K. PERSONNEL, Committee on

1. The Conference Personnel Committee should strive to be comprised of the following members: Nine voting members of which six (6) are members-at-large; plus one (1) representative, not an employee, from each of the following funding agencies: Covenant Council; Conference Council on Finance and Administration and New Faith Communities Committee. Ex-officio members without vote will be as follows: a representative from the Commission on Religion and Race, a representative from the Committee on the Status and Role of Women, a representative from the Appointive Cabinet and the Conference Personnel Office.

2. The Conference Personnel Committee will be responsible for the Conference Personnel Policies which are to be included in each Annual Conference Journal. The Committee will have general oversight of employment policies and practices along with the various funding agencies of the Annual Conference and its employees. The Committee, through the Personnel Officer, will develop policies and procedures so that a contemporary personnel system will function. The specific tasks that the Committee will be responsible for include but are not limited to:

a. The communication of policies and/or procedures to both exempt and nonexempt employees.

b. The assignment of wage ranges of the various personnel positions in consultation with the funding agencies.

c. The final appeal committee for grievance or administrative review.
d. Help in the development of new exempt positions in an advisory capacity.
e. Initiation of any amendments to the Conference Personnel Policies in consultation with the personnel officer and funding agencies. All amendments must be approved by the Annual Conference in order for them to be enacted and become part of the official Conference Personnel Policies.
f. Reception of and action upon any reports concerning sexual misconduct.
g. Interpretation of personnel policy decisions between Annual Conference sessions, if necessary. Such actions shall be reported to the next session of the Annual Conference for ratification and/or other action.
h. Provision of an annual report to each session of Annual Conference.
i. Establishment of parameters for the development of and review of job descriptions.
j. Establishment of guidelines for, and ensure completion of, performance reviews.

L. RELIGION AND RACE, Commission on

1. The Conference Commission on Religion and Race shall carry out functions in the area of racial inclusiveness by the reviewing of Conference groups and institutions, Conference priorities and minority empowerment.
2. The membership should strive to consist of sixteen (16) elected members; including one (1) representative from each of the four (4) Districts who shall serve as District Director and twelve (12) at-large members including at least one (1) person from each District. In addition, an Appointive Cabinet member shall serve with vote. The membership should strive to be racially inclusive, reflective of all ethnic groups in the Annual Conference.
3. Members of the Commission shall be elected quadrennially by the Annual Conference with a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms.
4. The officers and committee chairperson of this commission shall be elected at the spring meeting.

M. RULES, Committee on

There shall be a Conference Committee on Rules to consist of up to seven (7) members with a term of four (4) years each. The Conference Chancellor shall be an ex-officio member of the Rules Committee.

N. SESSIONS

O. STATUS & ROLE OF WOMEN, Commission on

P. STRATEGIC PLANNING Committee

1. **Authority and Responsibility**
   a. The Conference Strategic Planning Committee (CSPC) was established in 1987 by action of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference.
   b. The scope of authority and responsibility of the Conference Strategic Planning Committee is defined by the CSPC Strategic Plan, which is approved by the Bishop and the Annual Conference.
2. **Mission**
   The conference Strategic Planning Committee serves to support the leadership of the Bishop and the functioning of the Desert Southwest Conference as defined in ¶ 414.1 of the *Book of Discipline*.
3. **Structure**
   a. Chairperson - The Bishop shall appoint the Chairperson of the Conference Strategic Planning Committee. The Chairperson will serve in accordance with the rules of the Desert Southwest Conference.
   b. Membership
      1) The Bishop of the Desert Southwest Conference
      2) Four to six members, lay and/or clergy, shall be nominated by the Conference
      3) The Chairperson of the Conference Covenant Council
      4) The Chairperson of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration
      5) The Conference Lay Leader
      6) A District Superintendent, to be assigned by the Bishop
      7) The Conference Director of Connectional Ministries (without vote)
      8) The Conference Director of Administrative Services (without vote)
4. **Meetings**
   The Conference Strategic Planning Committee will meet as necessary. Ex-officio and Appointive Cabinet

participants will be welcome at any meeting but will be specifically invited to attend as needed.

Q. TRUSTEES

1. All net proceeds from any church closure asset sales are to be placed in the Desert Southwest Conference endowment fund for reaching new people. This endowment fund may also be used to support loans guaranteed by the Conference should the Loan Guarantee Fund be inadequate. Exceptions may be made by the Annual Conference, or by the Covenant Council between sessions of the Annual Conference, upon recommendation of the Appointive Cabinet in consultation with the New Faith Communities Committee or Vital Faith Communities Committee.
2. It is strongly recommended that the DSAC Chancellor's office serve as the statutory agent for all Arizona churches in the DSAC, effective with the next annual registration for each respective local church. For Nevada and California churches in the DSAC, it is strongly recommended that the DSAC Chancellor's office be copied on all annual filings and lawsuits filed against the churches effective July 1, 2018.

R. UNITED METHODIST MEN

S. UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

T. SIDEWALK SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE TEAM

Purpose: The Sidewalk Sunday School Committee shall support the Ministries of Sidewalk Sunday School within the Desert Southwest Conference. The committee will also make recommendations regarding membership of the Executive Team. The Chairperson of the Executive Team shall be the Chairperson of the Sidewalk Sunday School Committee.

1. The Executive Team should consist of six members; Chairperson, staff person (ex-officio without vote) and four members.
2. The members of the Executive Committee shall be all Sidewalk Sunday School site directors, and all affiliated Clergy and up to four (4) Members at Large.
3. The members of the Committee will serve terms as determined by the Conference Nominating Committee. A list of nominees will be submitted to the Conference Nominating Committee by the Sidewalk Sunday School Committee when required.
4. When a member has completed their term, they may not be reappointed to the Committee or Executive team for a period of at least one year.
5. The Executive Team will meet as necessary. All meetings will be funded by the Sidewalk Sunday School budget.
6. Responsibilities of the Executive Team shall include; Assisting staff person in review and setting of annual budget for the ministry. Establish standards as recommended by the Sidewalk Sunday School Committee. Support the Associate Director of Children & Youth Ministry at Risk, as needed.
7. Executive Team decisions shall be disseminated to the members of the Sidewalk Sunday School Committee in writing or by e-mail as appropriate.

U. COMMISSION ON COMMUNICATIONS

1. **Purpose:** The Commission on Communications will serve to guide and assist the communications staff and volunteers of the Desert Southwest Conference in their mission to facilitate Christian disciple-making through communications ministries, particularly (1) by facilitating communications within and among the agencies, leaders, and membership of the Desert Southwest Conference and (2) by helping to equip local congregations to communicate with their membership and communities. The Commission on Communications will work as directed by ¶ 646 of the *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* and guidelines adopted by the Annual Conference and Commission on Communications members.
2. **Membership and Structure:** The Commission on Communications should strive to consist of between 8 and 16 members elected at each year's annual conference session. Members shall be elected to four-year terms, with tenure not to exceed two terms.
   - **a.** Membership in the Commission on Communications is to be based upon interest and expertise. However, each District is asked to help identify at least 2 representatives from their district. The Commission recommends each district nominate at least 1 person to serve on the Commission and work with the superintendent and assistant to connect, conference and district communications.
   - **b.** The Commission recommends that each local church identify/elect a lay member to serve as a point of contact (communications liaison) for communications ministries.

c. Members of the Commission may be self-identified or recommended by district or conference nomination committees. Elections to the Commission on Communications shall be preceded by consultation between the conference lay leadership committee, district superintendents, and the Commission on Communications.
d. In addition to the elected members, the Director of Communications shall relate to the Commission on Communications.

3. **Responsibilities:** The Commission on Communications will:
   a. Be accountable to the annual conference session.
   b. Meet regularly to envision, encourage, and equip conference staff and volunteers as they serve to create and distribute communications pertinent to the mission and strategic direction of the annual conference.
   c. Periodically review, and guide staff in fulfilling, the strategic direction developed for conference communications.
   d. Create a team to work with the Commission on Communications to establish rules and guidelines for Conference communications and the training of local congregations in communications.

V. DISTRICT STRUCTURE

The Book of Discipline states that the purpose of the District Council on Ministries shall be to assist local churches to minister more effectively; to serve as a channel of communication between the local churches, the Annual Conference Covenant Council, and the general agencies of the Church; to initiate programs for the district; and to help the Annual Conference Covenant Council in the performance of its functions.

Each district may determine its structure and membership using whatever innovative methods and organizations that achieve the purpose of the District Council on Ministries as stated in the Discipline.

It is recommended that a District Conference be held each year on or after September 1 and not later than November 15. The membership of the District Conference may include, among others, the following: All clergy and diaconal ministers living within the bounds of the District; the deaconesses; lay pastors; members of the District Union Board of Trustees, the District Lay Leader and Associate District Lay Leader(s); the lay members of the Annual Conference located in the District; the Presidents of the District UMW and UMM; the President of the District Council on Youth Ministries; and, from each local church, the lay leaders, church school superintendents, Presidents of the UMW and President of the UMM, Chairpersons of church councils and a youth.

B. CONFERENCE PERSONNEL POLICIES

The following policies for Exempt Personnel and Non-Exempt Personnel are presented to the Desert Southwest Conference as revisions of, additions to, and deletions from policies previously adopted by the Conference at various times. These policies, as adopted by the Desert Southwest Conference, replace all policies previously adopted and, from the point of adoption, will be the policies for all employees within the Conference.

I. GENERAL POLICIES

A. Purpose and principles of the personnel policies:

It is the purpose of these personnel policies to establish and maintain a uniform system for managing personnel matters; to comply with applicable employment laws; and to provide for the standards, terms and conditions of employment within The Desert Southwest Conference (from this point on abbreviated as DSC) of the United Methodist Church. It is further intended, by the adoption and periodic updating of these policies and procedures that they serve as a guide for employees of the DSC in their routine work activities and relationships to the extent that the objectives of both the DSC and the individual employees can be achieved. The DSC also recognizes that employees differ in their skills, goals, perceptions, and values; and that it is basic to human nature for conditions to arise that are either insufficiently addressed in these policies and procedures, or that result in conflicts. In such cases, the DSC will endeavor to make personnel decisions that are fair and equitable, while at all times assuring that the best interests of the DSC are served. The DSC hereby asserts that it has the right to employ the best qualified persons available; that the continuation of employment is based on the need for work to be performed, availability of revenues, faithful and effective performance, proper personal conduct, and continuing fitness of employees; and that all employees are terminable at will. Conversely, employees deserve to be fully informed of their duties and responsibilities; to be provided with adequate administrative and supervisory direction; to be informed of their performance levels; to be compensated based on the value of their

contributions; to be considered for promotional opportunities; and to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

Therefore, the policies set forth in these Personnel Policies prescribe the terms, conditions, and standards of personnel operations for the DSC, the content of which is neither contractually binding upon the DSC nor restrictive in terms of amendment or interpretation by the DSC. The DSC reserves the right to change these personnel policies, salaries or wages and benefits at any time. The Personnel Policies are not intended to alter the employment at will relationship in any way. Employees are expected to acquaint themselves fully with the content of these policies in order to establish an employment relationship based on a complete understanding of the DSC personnel requirements, expectations, and methods of conducting personnel matters. Since it is the policy of the DSC to encourage employee participation in all matters that affect their work, employees are encouraged to offer suggestions for improvement to these policies, employment practices, or working conditions by contacting the Personnel Officer, or the supervisor of their respective funding agency for which they are employed, or the Conference Personnel Committee.

B. The *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*:

If there is a difference in interpretation or if a conflict arises between these Personnel Policies and the current *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, the current *Discipline* will prevail in interpretation as well as conclusion to any such questions.

C. Agencies affected by the conference personnel policies:

These policies will apply to all Exempt and Non-exempt Personnel within the DSC and specifically (but not restricted to) the following groups: The Covenant Council and related departments, the Conference Council on Finance and Administration and related agencies; the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, the District Offices of the DSC and all other groups, agencies or Boards that shall in the future be directed by the Annual Conference to employ Exempt and Non-Exempt Personnel under the policies of the Conference Personnel Committee.

D. Nepotism:

Persons shall not become employees of agencies of the DSC for any position that would require that person to be responsible for, or responsible to, a member of that person's family (spouses, parents, children, in-law, etc.) who is already employed by the DSC. Any exceptions to this policy must be authorized by the Conference Personnel Committee prior to any employment.

E. Term Limits:

Effective no later than July 1, 2022, no clergy member may serve for more than eight years in any consecutive eleven years on either the appointive cabinet or in Level I positions. No clergy person shall serve on the Appointive Cabinet or in Level I positions more than fourteen years. A change in position from one Level I position to another Level I position shall not reset this time limit/counter.

F. General conduct of employees:

An obligation rests with every employee of the DSC to render honest, efficient, and courteous performance of duties. All personnel will therefore be responsible and held accountable for adherence to all policies, rules, directives, and procedures prescribed by the DSC through supervisory or management personnel. All employees have a duty to report, verbally or in writing, promptly and confidentially, any evidence of any improper practice of which they are aware. As used here, the term "improper practice" means any illegal, fraudulent, racist, dishonest, negligent, or otherwise unethical action arising in connection with the DSC. Reports of improper practice should be reported to the Personnel Officer except when the alleged impropriety appears to involve a supervisor in which case such reports should be referred to the Conference Personnel Committee.

G. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO):

The DSC believes employment decisions should be based on an individual's qualifications and without regard to condition or status of race, color, gender, age, disability, marital status, sexual/gender orientation, veteran status, national origin, and any other protected class under applicable laws. This nondiscrimination policy applies to all employment areas, including recruitment, hiring, compensation, benefits, training, promotions, workforce reductions, discipline, and termination. A preference for United Methodist membership may be included in the qualifications for positions as determined appropriate by the Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer and the Conference Personnel Committee.

H. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

The DSC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act by providing a work environment free from

discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Employment opportunities will be available to qualified individuals with disabilities. Further, reasonable accommodation will be provided for qualified individuals with disabilities unless that accommodation produces an undue hardship. In addition, events and activities planned, conducted, or sponsored by the Conference will be in a location that is accessible to disabled persons with or without accommodation. To request an accommodation, contact your supervisor or the Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer.

Definitions

Disability. A physical or mental impairment, a record of such an impairment, or being perceived as having such an impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activity, such as hearing, speaking, breathing, and certain manual tasks.

Essential functions. The fundamental duties of a position; eliminating these duties would fundamentally change the job.

Qualified individual with a disability. A person with a disability and with the qualifications to perform the essential functions of a position with or without reasonable accommodation.

Reasonable accommodation. Modification or adjustment to the work environment or to the manner or circumstances under which a job is customarily performed which enables a qualified person with a disability to perform the essential functions of the position.

II. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

A. Employment at will:

All employees are hired conditionally on the basis of continuing need. Those employment status categories (Section II: F) or anything contained in these policies and procedures do not guarantee employment for any specified length of time. Rather, employment is at the mutual consent of the employee and the DSC and can be terminated at will by the employee or the DSC. Professional staff who are clergy have certain Disciplinary rights; therefore, their termination must be in accordance with the current *Book of Discipline*. No DSC supervisor is authorized to modify this policy for any employee, or to enter into any agreement, oral or written, contrary to this policy. Completion of a probationary period or the conferral of another employment status will not change this employment at will policy, nor will it restrict in any way the DSC's right to terminate such an employee nor change his/her terms or conditions of employment.

B. New positions:

New positions are those in which there is an identified, justified, and approved list of job tasks and qualification standards sufficiently different from existing job descriptions, or the position is in addition to positions of the existing employee structure of the DSC. New Exempt position requests must be approved by the funding agency, supervisor(s), the Conference Personnel Committee, the Council on Finance and Administration, as well as the Covenant Council or an Annual (or special) Conference of the DSC. Prior to approval and hiring by the DSC, a thorough job description will be prepared and a wage range assigned for that position by the review and approval of the Conference Personnel Committee.

C. Job descriptions:

The Personnel Officer will be responsible for maintaining thorough job descriptions on all classes of employment with the aid and assistance of agency supervisors and the Conference Personnel Committee. Such job descriptions should contain the designation as to whether the position(s) covered by the job description are categorized as Exempt or Non-Exempt, in addition to duty and qualification specification. All job descriptions will be reviewed annually by supervisor(s) with input from the funding agencies to determine their continued accuracy, completeness, compliance with applicable standards of state and federal laws, and relevance to the DSC's pay and performance evaluation systems. Job descriptions and the allocation of employees to positions may be revised or altered from time to time at the sole discretion of the DSC as a means of operational efficiency and the changing nature of the needs that arise. When and where it is deemed appropriate, the DSC will endeavor to advise affected employees of changes in job description details or their allocation to a specific position, including the determination to abolish positions, in which case employees may be offered other positions for which they are qualified.

D. Hiring:

1. All position openings, both Exempt and Non-Exempt, with the qualifications required, shall be advertised as widely as possible to provide the maximum exposure to all possible applicants by the funding agency requiring such personnel. A job description will be provided by the supervisor (or the employing Board or

Agency) to each applicant so that the duties and reporting assignment may be fully understood. Utilizing established salary ranges, the funding agency will establish wages or salaries and also make provisions for performance reviews. The following steps are suggested.

a. Advise or consult with the Bishop and Appointive Cabinet of the opening and request suggestions of both laity and clergy.

b. Publicize in such a way that the entire DSC will have the opportunity to suggest candidates.

c. Advertise through DSC and, if appropriate, national church communications.

d. Request desired applicants to apply. In the case of clergy, the agency must submit the proposed name to the Bishop and the Appointive Cabinet for approval.

e. At the point of employment, the employee will be notified of their employment status (see II.F.), wages, benefits (if any) and any other specifics of their employment which will also include a statement concerning the introductory period (see II.E.). This will be done in writing by the supervisor or funding agency.

f. Rehires (after June 17, 2018) – After an introductory period of 30 days, a previously employed person shall start their "regular" employment eligibility in terms of cumulative years of employment from the point at which they were when their prior employment ceased.

E. Introductory period:

Both Exempt and Non-Exempt employees shall be employed for an initial introductory period of 90 calendar days. In the case of former employees who are being rehired (after June 17, 2018), the introductory period shall be 30 calendar days. During this time the supervisor will periodically evaluate his/her compatibility, ability, and interest in the job. In the case of an Exempt Employee, this will be done by the funding agency. Following the successful completion of the introductory period a staff member will be notified by supervisor or funding agency, in writing, that he/she is being placed on "regular" status as defined in Section II.F. The staff member will then become eligible for employee benefits once he/she satisfies the terms and conditions of the various benefit programs. The exception to receiving delayed eligibility benefits are those who already receive benefits and are continually employed or promoted to other positions by the DSC.

F. Employment status categories:

It is the policy of the DSC to categorize the status of employees in order to make distinctions in benefits and conditions of employment among employees, and to aid in a better understanding of employment relationships with the DSC. The nomenclature of "employee" and "personnel" mean one and the same. All personnel will be given an employment status of either Non-Exempt or Exempt Employees.

1. Non-Exempt Employees: Employees covered by overtime pay and other distinctive provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act or applicable state laws. Such employees are entitled to overtime pay for work required to be performed by the DSC over forty (40) hours per workweek or as state law requires.

2. Exempt Employees: Employees classified by the DSC as Exempt are ineligible for overtime pay and other employment conditions as provided for in the Fair Labor Standards Act and applicable state laws. Generally, such employees are those occupying executive, administrative, or professional positions.
In addition to the above employment status designation which is required by law, all employees will be also classified in one of the following categories so that the DSC is able to determine benefits, etc.

3. Introductory Employees: New, rehired, or promoted employees who serve within the periods as described in Section II: E, and who are supervised and evaluated in order to assess their ability and adaption. Introductory employee(s) may be terminated at the will or discretion of the Personnel Officer, or the Agency or Board under which the employee serves. This applies to both Exempt and Non-Exempt employees.

4. Regular Full Time Employees: Employees, both Exempt and Non-Exempt who regularly work a minimum of forty (40) hours per week on a continuous basis following satisfactory completion of an introductory period and who are entitled to overtime pay beyond the 40 hours per week.

5. Regular Part-time employees: Employees who complete a satisfactory Introductory period and regularly work more than twenty (20) but less than forty (40) hours per week on a continuous basis.

6. Temporary Employees: Employees holding jobs of limited or specified duration arising out of special projects, position vacancy pending appointment, the absence of a position incumbent, abnormal workloads, emergencies, or other reasons established by the DSC. Part-time, temporary and substitute employees shall be hired only when provided for in the budget, or when an off-setting reduction will result in a separate

budget item, and then only upon approval of the chairperson of the funding agency. Temporary employment is interpreted to mean any employment period less than 120 consecutive days within any 365-day period, beginning with the first day of employment.

7. Each employee working a minimum of 30 hours per week is eligible to participate in the conference-sponsored Health Insurance Plan. Each employee working a minimum of 30 hours per week is also eligible to participate in the conference-sponsored Pension Plan.

G. Exempt personnel levels:

There shall be a job description developed by the funding agency for every Exempt position which shall include the responsibilities for the position, the qualifications and skills needed. This description shall be filed with the Conference Personnel Files. Levels of salary ranges will be determined by the Conference Personnel Committee. Each year prior to the budget planning process, all funding agencies will recommend any changes of compensation within the ranges as approved by the DSC. Factors to be given consideration include: complexity of responsibility, supervisory responsibility, budgeting responsibility; and level of decision-making responsibility.

The levels of Exempt personnel include:

I. Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer; Director of Connectional Ministries, Director of New & Vital Faith Communities, and District Superintendents.
II. Director of Communications, Director of Camp & Retreat Ministries, Director of Outreach Ministries, and Assistant Treasurer/Comptroller
III. Camp Managers
IV. Assistant Camp Managers

H. Reclassification of Employment positions:

If and when a change in job description necessitates raising the job level of a position, the employee filling said position will be given the opportunity to apply for that new position. The employee may be reclassified which means that, after a careful interview process, the person filling the position is deemed qualified to fill the requirements of the expanded job description. If, after the interview process, it is determined this person is not qualified for reclassification then the process for the filling of a vacant position will be followed.

I. Confidentiality:

The DSC maintains control over entrance to premises occupied by its personnel, access to work locations and records, computer information, and anything of monetary value. Personnel who are assigned keys, given special access, or assigned job responsibilities in connection with the security or confidentiality of records, equipment, etc. will be required to use sound judgment and discretion in carrying out their duties, and will be held accountable for any wrongdoing or acts of indiscretion or breaches of security.

III. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

A. Administration of personnel system:

Ultimate authority for interpretation, application, and enforcement of Personnel Policies rest with the DSC. The Conference Personnel Committee and the Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer, who also serves as the Personnel Officer, will be responsible for personnel operations and will also be responsible for such personnel matters as:

1. Initiation of amendments and revisions to these policies and procedures at times determined by the DSC to be necessary or warranted.
2. Initiation or revisions to job descriptions, recommend wage and salary schedules or ranges to be approved annually by the DSC, benefit plans and programs, and performance evaluation systems.
3. Involvement, along with the funding agency, in recruitment, selection evaluations, equal employment opportunity, and personnel records.
4. Performance of other duties that may be necessary to carry out the practices and provisions of a contemporary personnel system.

It is further understood that the Conference Personnel Committee will be the policy-making body for the DSC and the Director of Administrative Services, who is also the Personnel Officer, is responsible for administration of the personnel policies within the Annual Conference. The Conference Personnel Committee will also maintain an open-door policy so that personnel can voice their questions, concerns, etc. if there is such need.

B. Personnel files:

Complete personnel files shall be kept containing Conference Personnel Policies, job descriptions, employment applications and resumes, confirmations of employment, annual performance reviews, and annual payroll data for all Exempt and Non-exempt employees. These files shall reside in the office of the Personnel Officer who shall be responsible for their accuracy and confidentiality as they relate to employees of the DSC. Furthermore, supervisors or the funding agency is responsible for the documentation of personnel performance records and copies will be made available to personnel who request their own records. The Personnel Officer will establish retention schedules of employees' files so that these files are properly maintained. Funding agencies will have access to appropriate files of their personnel.

C. Performance evaluation:

1. Exempt personnel shall be evaluated annually by their supervisor with input from the funding agency according to specific objectives jointly agreed upon.
2. In the case of Non-Exempt personnel, annual reports of each employee's performance during the preceding year are to be completed by supervisory personnel and discussed with the employee prior to its presentation to the Personnel Officer or the funding agency.
3. The date for completing and submission of the annual performance evaluation will be prior to December 1 of each year.
4. The rating supervisor will provide the employee with a copy of the evaluation report at the time of discussion with the employee. A completed, signed, and dated copy will then be submitted to the Personnel Officer for placement in the employee's personnel file.
5. Where rating supervisors have identified characteristics of an employee's performance needing improvement, the supervisor should be as specific as possible in describing the deficiency, and the ways and means of improving to an acceptable level. Supervisors are therefore entitled to retain a copy of each of their employee's evaluation reports for the purpose of follow-up to any actions required, or for reference in general.
6. When the Personnel Officer or a supervisor observes a marked change in the performance of an employee that is not disciplinary in nature, an unscheduled performance evaluation can be completed in the same manner as an annual report. Typically, discretionary performance reports are completed by the immediate supervisor and reviewed with the employee and placed in the personnel file as a means of formally recognizing the need to correct significant declines in an employee's performance.
7. A substandard rating, as applied to performance means any rating below the rating level of "satisfactory." Employees receiving a substandard rating or ratings will not be eligible to receive a merit pay increase.

D. Expense and travel policies:

1. Expense allowance will be paid on submission of approved monthly expense statements on the basis of prevailing rates set by the Council on Finance and Administration. A log shall be maintained giving date, mileage, and destination. Travel between home and office is not included.
2. Airfare and other necessary public transportation or car rental will be at lowest rate available. If car rental is used in lieu of personal vehicle, reimbursement will be at the applicable mileage rate.
3. Hotel charge will be paid only if required travel is further than fifty (50) miles from home.
4. Meals and tips, to a maximum per day, will be determined annually by Council on Finance and Administration.
5. All expenses incurred by Exempt Personnel in the performance of their duties are to be charged to the appropriate budget.
6. Annual Conference room and board will be paid for, including the spouse of a Level One (I) Exempt employee. Other family expenses are the responsibility of the Exempt Personnel.
7. Monthly statements comparing actual expenses to budgeted figures will be provided by the Conference Treasurer. Care shall be taken to keep actual expenses at or below the budgeted amount. Vouchers and documentation should reach the Office of Administrative Services/Treasurer within forty-five (45) days of the incurrence of the expense.
8. In the event a request for payment exceeds any annual budgeted area of expense, the Conference Treasurer should not reimburse expenses, except for salary-related items. An appeal for payment beyond the budgeted area of expense may be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Council on Finance and Administration for consideration.

E. Disciplinary procedure:

1. As a matter of policy, the DSC seeks to resolve conduct and performance problems in the most informal and positive manner possible, such as through counseling, additional training or supervision, or verbal cautions. However, under those circumstances when disciplinary action, including termination, become a necessary means of modifying undesirable situations, the DSC has established the conditions and procedures that follow. To insure the equitable processing of disciplinary actions, the Personnel Officer will be responsible for the proper handling of such matters, including the assurance that employee rights are protected, and that appropriate action is taken when circumstances warrant. Supervisory personnel should therefore consult with the Personnel Officer prior to the implementation of discipline.
2. The following are examples of disciplinary issues: improper or unauthorized use or abuse of paid leave, excessive absenteeism, engaging in a conflict of interest activity, conviction of a crime, knowingly falsifying, removing or destroying important and permanent types of information, soliciting outside work for personal gain during business hours, physical altercations, intoxication, and use of illegal drugs.
3. Types and progression of discipline:
   Depending on the nature and circumstances of an incident, discipline will normally be progressive and bear a reasonable relationship to the violation. The types of discipline that may occur are as follows in general order of increasing formality and seriousness.
   a. Verbal Reprimand: A verbal statement by the supervisor, usually pointing out an unsatisfactory element of job performance, is intended to be corrective or cautionary. A verbal reprimand informally defines the area of needed improvement, sets up goals for the achievement of improvement, and informs the employee that failure to improve may result in more serious actions. A supervisor must inform the employee that (s)he is making a verbal reprimand and the supervisor will also document such action for future reference. Such documentation will be placed in the employee's personnel file kept by the Personnel Officer.
   b. Written Reprimand(s): This is the first level of formal discipline. The written reprimand is issued by the supervisor, in consultation with the Personnel Officer, and a copy is placed in the employee's personnel file. Two or more written reprimands for the same infraction may lead to suspension depending upon the violation.
   c. Suspension: An employee may be suspended from work without pay, in the case of Nonexempt Employee for a maximum period of five working days and for an Exempt Employee a maximum of two weeks. Suspensions of longer duration require approval by the Conference Personnel Committee. Under certain circumstances, it may be necessary to restrict an employee immediately from performing duties. Such circumstances usually involve potential danger to the employee, co-workers, or the public, or the employee's inability to satisfactorily discharge assigned duties. Because of the need for immediate action, the decision to suspend an employee is typically the responsibility of the supervisor or funding agency. In these situations, the following procedure is to be followed: The supervisor taking the action to suspend an employee will immediately notify the Personnel Officer and, as soon as possible, prepare a written statement of the action taken and the reasons for such action. Such a written statement will have a statement of the charges and any supporting evidence for suspension. The employee will be immediately (within the same working day) notified of such action by written communication. In no event will the use of paid time be allowed during a period of suspension. Should a paid holiday occur during a period of suspension without pay, the suspension period will be extended by the number of holidays occurring during the suspension period.
   d. Discharge: All personnel should be aware that their employment relationship with the DSC is based on the condition of mutual consent to continue the relationship between the employee and the DSC. Therefore, the employee or the DSC is free to terminate the employment relationship at will, with or without cause, and at any time. Recommendations to discharge an employee by a supervisor or funding agency are to be made to and authorized by the Personnel Officer and the Conference Personnel Committee.
4. Supervisors and funding agencies should be guided in their consideration of disciplinary matters by the following illustrative, but not exclusive, conditions: the degree of severity of the offense, the number, nature, and circumstances of similar past offenses, employee's length of service, provocation, if any, contributing to the offense, previous warnings related to the offense, consistency of penalty application, equity and relationship of penalty to offense.

5. Disciplinary notices to regular employees should, as a general rule, contain the following information: a statement of the disciplinary action to be taken and its effective date; a statement of the reason(s) for imposing the discipline: the nature of the violation; and attachment of any supporting material or evidence where appropriate.
6. A period of one year during which an employee experiences no disciplinary problems will nullify any previous violations or incidents for purposes of implementing the disciplinary procedures contained in this policy.

F. Grievances or administrative review:

1. Personnel who have complaints, problems, concerns, or disputes may initiate an administrative review according to established procedures. Such matters must have to do with specific working conditions, unfair treatment, disciplinary actions, compensation, job classification, reassignments, or any form of alleged discrimination.
2. All personnel who have a problem, complaint, or dispute should make every effort to resolve the matter through informal discussion with a supervisor or the funding agency within ten (10) working days of the occurrence or cause of such matter. The supervisor will take the matter under consideration and attempt to resolve it verbally or provide a satisfactory explanation within five (5) working days, unless additional time is needed to gather adequate information.
3. If the employee's matter is unresolved, or not resolved to the employee's satisfaction through informal procedures, the aggrieved employee may file a written request for review with the Personnel Officer within five (5) working days following the supervisor's informal response. Within five (5) working days of receiving the employee's written request the Personnel Officer may arrange a meeting with the employee to allow the employee to present a personal and complete description of the situation. The Personnel Officer after investigation or evaluation of the facts related to the situation, will render a written decision within a period of fifteen (15) working days.
4. If an employee is not satisfied with the outcome with the Personnel Officer's response, the employee may file a copy of the same written request to the Conference Personnel Committee within five (5) working days of such response. The Conference Personnel Committee will investigate the basis of the problem, evaluate and provide a written response within fifteen (15) working days. Such a decision or response will be final and conclusive.
5. There may arise certain circumstances in which it may be inappropriate for employees to pursue the resolution of the problem in the above prescribed sequence. Consequently, the following exceptions are instances where an employee may bypass steps to seek resolution of a situation by the next higher authority. Some exceptions are, but not exclusive, as follows: if the complaint or problem involves a known or suspected violation of law; if the complaint or problem is clearly not within the authority of the immediate supervisor; if the nature of the complaint, problem, or dispute involves or has been caused by the employee's supervisor, or the employee has reason to believe the supervisor may be less than impartial.

G. Injuries:

Any injury during employment, no matter how trivial, must be reported at once by the employee to the immediate supervisor. The employee in consultation with the supervisor should see that proper medical treatment is obtained. All forms on which to report such accidents must be obtained from the Personnel Officer's office and completed and returned within forty-eight (48) hours after the incident.

H. Employment separation:

1. A Non-Exempt Employee wishing to leave employment with the DSC in good standing must file a written resignation with the immediate supervisor who will notify the Personnel Officer at least ten (10) working days prior to the effective date, stating specific reasons for the resignation. Failure of the employee to give such notice will be noted on the employee's service record and may result in denial of future employment by the DSC.
2. It is possible that "Layoffs" may be necessary and an employee may be subject to a non-disciplinary, involuntary termination in connection with a shortage of funds, abolition of a position, or lack of need for the work performed by an employee. In such cases, affected employees will be given as reasonable amount of advance notice as conditions permit.
3. Personnel who resign, retire, are discharged, or laid off should have an exit interview with the Personnel Officer for the purpose of finalizing employment separation.

4. Termination *for cause* can be immediately implemented. The following are some examples of *for cause* situations: abandonment of employment by an employee; refusal to perform duties, incompetency; neglect of duties; misconduct, insubordination, intoxication, fraud or intentional misrepresentation.
5. Termination for cause will include an exit interview and will include, but are not limited to, the following items: written notes including the name of employee, date of exit interview and the person conducting the exit interview as well as names of any witnesses; discussion of the reason(s) for termination; information regarding the employee final paycheck including the date and the amount that can be expected; receipt of any keys to buildings from employee and any other property that belongs to the DSC.
6. Accumulated sick leave shall not be compensated at the time of termination or resignation.

IV. COMPENSATION AND RELATED ITEMS

A. Compensation policy and wage ranges:

1. Wage ranges have been designated to take into consideration the prevailing wage rates currently paid for similar work in the prevailing market and the level of responsibility to be performed.
2. Changes in wage ranges and the basis for determining such changes shall be approved by the DSC at its annual session. Salary changes, when granted within the respective wage ranges, will normally become effective on January 1 of the ensuing calendar year.
3. There shall be four (4) levels of wage ranges for Exempt employees and five (5) levels for Non-Exempt employees. The classification of each position and the pay scale applicable to each position will be established by the Conference Personnel Committee. The reclassification of an exempt position can be made only with the approval of the DSC and the Conference Personnel Committee; the latter would then assign the appropriate wage-range.
4. A newly hired employee may have a beginning salary anywhere within the appropriate wage range. Newly hired employees will not be considered for an increase in compensation unless they have been employed for a period of six (6) months or more; this applies to both Exempt and Non-Exempt Personnel.

B. Payroll time reports:

All Non-Exempt Employees are considered to be working on fixed schedules. The individual fixed schedule is to be part of the personnel files of each employee. Deviation from the fixed schedule requires written documentation to be filed with the Personnel Officer prior to the close of the pay period in which the exception occurs. (I.e. sick leave, vacation, bereavement leave, etc.; please also refer to the Federal Labor Standards Act 516.2b(c).

C. Payroll periods:

The DSC payroll and payday periods are from the first (1st) to the fifteenth (15th) and the sixteenth (16th) to the last day of each month. Payroll periods are separate and distinct from the workday or workweek, which are time periods used to determine overtime compensation calculations to be entered on payroll records for each payroll period in which overtime is earned. Payroll records are to be prepared and promptly submitted to the Director of Administration/Treasurer. Payroll record errors found after submission by the person completing the record will be adjusted on the next payroll record with proper notations to explain the error and adjustment. Under unusual circumstances of payroll record errors, exceptions to this policy may be authorized by the Personnel Officer. If at any time an employee wishes to authorize any other person to receive his/her paycheck, the employee must submit such a written authorization to the Personnel Officer. Under no circumstances will paychecks be authorized by the Personnel Officer for advance release and there will be no payroll advances given to any employee.

D. Payroll deductions and attachments:

1. Deductions from each employee's gross pay period earnings are of two types: mandatory and voluntary. Mandatory deductions are those required to be made by the DSC by law, court order, or other legally compelling influence on payroll. Such deductions include state and federal income tax withholding, social security, Medicare and wage garnishments. Voluntary deductions are those requested by employees to be made on their behalf and may include such items as employee contributions to health care, optional pension or retirement plans, credit union or savings accounts, etc.
2. Mandatory deductions in accordance with applicable legal requirements will be made automatically by the DSC. However, mandatory deductions such as state/federal income tax where the DSC must rely on information provided by an employee, will be the sole responsibility of the employee to provide accurate information within legal limitations.

3. Voluntary deductions will not be made without the employee's written request or authorization, and advance approval by the Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer. Attachments made to employee paychecks by legal authority of wage garnishment, regardless of cause, will be regarded as a mandatory deduction in the amount, and for the time, specified in the order.
4. The DSC recognizes its obligations both to employees and laws that prohibit discrimination solely on the basis of wage garnishments for a single indebtedness. However, in cases where wage garnishments are for multiple indebtedness, or directly and detrimentally reflect upon the employee's job duties and responsibilities, or reflect upon the DSC in a way that adversely affects its reputation or general business welfare, the employee may be subject to termination. Cases of this type will be reviewed by the Personnel Officer and the Conference Personnel Committee to seek corrective measures prior to a termination decision, and to ensure that all termination decisions are based on non-discriminatory criteria.

E. Overtime approval:
Advance approval by the employee's immediate supervisor for overtime work is required. A report of overtime which has been approved, together with the justification thereof, shall be filled with the Personnel Officer.

F. Overtime compensation:
Payment for overtime shall be paid at 1 ½ times the regular rate of pay for work performed in excess of forty (40) hours in any regular workweek. All work done within the limit of forty hours will be paid at the regular rate. Equal compensatory time, within the provisions of Federal or State Law, may be granted at the discretion of the employee's supervisor provided that such compensatory time shall be granted prior to the period of overtime and shall be taken during the period Monday through Friday for overtime work to be accomplished on the Saturday or Sunday immediately following. In no event shall compensatory time be granted subsequent to the payment of overtime, nor may compensatory time be accumulated beyond the forty (40) hour workweek in which it is earned.

G. Merit increases:
In recognition of exemplary or above-average job performance demonstrated by personnel during the year preceding their annual performance evaluation, the DSC has established a pay incentive program that rewards commendable performance by granting merit pay increases. When supervisors or funding agencies determine in the course of preparing the performance evaluation that an employee has demonstrated consistent and enduring superior performance, or that the employee has achieved an eligible rating for a merit increase, the supervisors or funding agencies will provide a specific written recommendation concerning the proposed amount of merit increase and its justification to the Personnel Officer. If there are questions or problems in addressing merit increases, these will be referred to the Conference Personnel Committee. Proposed merit increases will also be reported to the Conference Personnel Committee.

V. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

A. Bereavement leave:
In the case of a death in the immediate family (spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, and grandchildren), no deduction of salary or wages will be made for absence from work. A maximum of three (3) working days leave will be granted within the area and five (5) working days out of the area.

B. Continuing education, sabbatical or leaves:
Continuing education, sabbatical and renewal leaves are available for the benefit of the agency/DSC and the employee, as employees return to work after the leaves with improved skills and/or renewed vigor. Leaves will be arranged for by the supervisor or funding agency as agreed upon with the employee. A request for a leave must include a statement of how it will benefit the agency or the DSC. The granting of a leave in any given year will depend upon the strength and relevance of the proposal, the adequacy and feasibility of the interim staffing plan, and practical considerations such as budget and staff deployment.
Paid leaves will be available for an employee after each cumulative five-year period of working at least 30 hours per week. For employees who have been previously employed and rehired (after June 17, 2018), following the 30-day introductory period, the employment period in terms of cumulative years, begins from the point at which they were when their prior employment ceased. The leaves are available as follows:

I. Level 1 Exempt Employees – three months leave every five years
II. Other Exempt Employees – two months leave every five years
III. Non-Exempt Employees – one month leave every five years

C. Pension, Disability, and Death Benefits:

Pension, disability, and death benefits are provided to lay employees after one year of employment with the employee working a minimum of 30 hours per week. The United Methodist Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) offered Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath) will be funded at a rate of 3% to 9% of the salary for lay employees by the Conference and may also include immediate voluntary contribution by the employee to Wespath's (UMPIP). The lay death and disability plan offered by Wespath will provide 100% of salary death benefit and a 60% of salary (up to $5,000 per month) long term disability benefit.
The Clergy Retirement Security Plan (CRSP) offered through Wespath will be applicable for all clergy staff of the Annual Conference. The Comprehensive Protection Plan offered by Wespath will provide death and disability benefit for the clergy staff of the Annual Conference.

D. Health insurance:

1. Health insurance will be provided for Exempt Employees and their dependents by the funding agency. In the case of Non-exempt Employees, health insurance will be provided for the employee only.
2. Retired Lay Employee Health Benefit: Lay employees who have worked for the United Methodist Church and for the Desert Southwest Annual Conference for a combined minimum of ten (10) continuous years, and have reached age sixty-two (62), and have a pension claim on the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits will receive health insurance premium subsidies equivalent to the amount paid to claimants who are on Medicare coverage to be applied toward participation in the Conference Health Insurance Plan.

E. Holidays:

New Year's Day	Independence Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday	Labor Day
President's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Good Friday	Day following Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve Day
Juneteenth Day	Christmas Day

1. In the event holidays fall on Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be taken instead.
2. If above holidays fall on Sunday, the following Monday shall be taken instead.
3. If work is required and approved on any of the above holidays, overtime rate shall be double the hourly rate of the Non-exempt Employee.
4. If the holiday(s) occurs during an approved period of vacation, it shall not be charged against vacation leave, but an additional day shall be added to such vacation leave.
5. Part-time employees shall be entitled to holiday allowances computed on a fractional basis in relationship to the time worked in a normal forty (40) hour work week.
6. In order to be eligible for holiday payments a Non-exempt Employee must work a full day the working day before and the working day after the holiday. If the absence was due to illness, vacation, or with prior approval by the supervisor, eligibility for holiday payment shall be maintained.

F. Housing Allowance:

In the case of clergy, the recipient may request the Conference Council on Finance and Administration Executive Committee to designate any part of the total of salary and housing allowance as a "Housing Allowance Exclusion."

G. Jury Duty:

Salary or wages will be paid during any absence for jury duty provided the remuneration for serving on the jury is submitted to the Personnel Officer.

H. Maternity/Paternity leave:

Maternity or Paternity leave is not to exceed three (3) months and will be available to any 30 hours or more personnel who request it at the birth or adoption of a child. This leave shall be used within six (6) months of the birth or adoption. Up to three month's salary will be paid.

I. Sick Leave:

1. Sick leave for both Exempt and Non-exempt Personnel will be accumulated at one and one-half (1 ½) days per month of continuous service, with no limit. In any case not more than sixty-six (66) working days will be used in a calendar year. An employee will be eligible for sick leave after the introductory period. There will be no compensation for accumulated sick leave. Any exception to these rules will require review by the Conference Personnel Committee.

2. There will be a Sick Leave Pool that can be established and maintained through the contributions by active employees of unused sick leave. This pool may be used to fund sick leave for employees that have limited sick leave. The Personnel Administrator may authorize an additional twenty (20) working days of sick leave per year drawn from the Sick Leave Pool. Sick leave needed beyond the additional twenty (20) days would require approval of the Personnel Committee. A maximum lifetime contribution of fifty (50) sick leave days per person may be contributed to the Sick Leave Pool.
3. In cases of extended illness, the supervisor with consent of the funding agency may request from the Conference Personnel Committee additional sick leave time with pay to be granted to the employee. The employee's sick leave record shall be taken into consideration for granting additional leave.
4. Sick leave is provided on a paid basis in cases of necessity and actual sickness or injury of a full-time employee or family member (as defined below) which reasonably compels the employee to be absent from work. The employee should notify his/her supervisor as soon as practicable of any such absence and subsequent days away from the job because of illness.
   A family member is defined as a:
   - child (biological child, adopted child, foster child, stepchild, legal ward, child of a domestic partner, child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis, and individual to whom the employee stood in loco parentis when the individual was a minor),
   - parent (biological, foster, stepparent, adoptive parent, or legal guardian, of an employee or an employee's spouse or domestic partner or a person who stood in loco parentis when the employee or employee's spouse or domestic partner was a minor child),
   - spouse (a person to whom the employee is legally married under the laws of any state),
   - domestic partner (a domestic partner of an employee as registered under the laws of any state or political subdivision),
   - grandparent (biological, foster, adoptive, or step grandparent of the employee or the employee's spouse or domestic partner),
   - grandchild (biological, foster, adoptive, or step grandchild of the employee or the employee's spouse or domestic partner),
   - sibling (biological, foster, adoptive, or step sibling of the employee or the employee's spouse or domestic partner),
   - any other individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.
5. Reasonable time away from the job may be granted by the immediate supervisor for occasional medical and dental appointments and shall not be charged to sick leave. Additionally, a maximum of two sick days per Calendar year may be used as personal days with prior approval of the immediate supervisor.
6. Allowance for sick pay will be subject to a doctor's certification or other proof after an absence of three (3) consecutive workdays.
7. Part-time employees shall be entitled to sick pay benefits in accordance with the provisions as set forth above. Sick leave shall be computed, and accumulated, on a fractional basis per month of the average working hours worked per week.

J. Social Security:

The employer's share of Social Security (for employees not treated as self-employed for Social Security purposes) will be paid by the DSC.

K. Vacation:

1. Exempt Personnel:
   Each Exempt employee shall be entitled to an allocation of a maximum of four (4) weeks of paid vacation per year subject to approval of the supervisor or the funding agency. Vacations shall be taken during the year that the vacation allocation is awarded and are available after completing the probationary period. In the case of clergy or Conference employees receiving a new assignment within the Conference, the vacation privilege will be immediately available under the usual provisions. Used vacation for non-clergy employees will be reported to the Personnel Officer for accounting purposes.
2. Non-exempt personnel:

a. A Full-time employee shall become eligible to take any accrued vacation after completing the three-month introductory period. For employees who have been previously employed and rehired (after June 17, 2018), following the 30-day introductory period, the employment period in terms of cumulative years, begins from the point at which they were when their prior employment ceased. Accrual schedule is as follows:

1st day through three (3) month introductory period	no vacation accrual
1st day of 4th month through 1st anniversary	1 day for each month of service
1st day of 2nd year through 4th anniversary	10 working days per year
1st day of 5th year through 9th anniversary	15 working days per year
1st day of 10th year and following	20 working days per year
For rehires (after June 17, 2018):	
1st day through 30-day introductory period	no vacation accrual
1st day of 2nd month through 1st anniversary	1 day for each month of service
(after this, accrual remains the same as above)	

b. A part-time employee shall become eligible for paid vacation leave after completing the three-month introductory period. For employees who have been previously employed and rehired (after June 17, 2018), following the 30-day introductory period, the employment period in terms of cumulative years, begins from the point at which they were when their prior employment ceased. Such leave shall be computed on a fractional basis in relationship to the time worked in a normal workweek. Example: An employee works twenty (20) hours weekly and would be entitled to 20/40 or ½ vacation leave

c. All requests for vacation leave shall be submitted to the immediate supervisor for approval. The immediate supervisor will coordinate with the balance of the staff.

d. An approved holiday falling within a vacation period shall entitle the employee to an extra day of vacation.

e. There shall be no cash grant in lieu of vacation except at termination of employment.

VI. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

A. The *Book of Discipline* and the *Book of Resolutions*:

The Desert Southwest Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church affirms The UMC *Book of Resolutions*; "Sexual Abuse Within the Ministerial Relationship and Sexual Harassment Within the Church." This states that sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship and sexual harassment within the church is incompatible with biblical teachings of hospitality, justice, and healing. In accordance with the *Book of Discipline*, (¶ 161*F*), all human beings, both male and female, are created in the image of God, and thus have been made equal in Christ. As the promise of Galatians 3:26-29 states, all are one in Christ, we support equity among all persons without regard to ethnicity, situation, or gender. The following procedures are for both Exempt and Non-Exempt Employees and the course of action which will be taken will depend upon whether a person is a clergy or lay employee. The DSC has established a strict policy prohibiting unlawful harassment of employees and will take appropriate measures to resolve or correct the situation in an expeditious manner.

B. Definition of Sexual Misconduct:

Sexual misconduct within the leadership role (ministerial and lay) occurs when a person within that role engages in sexual contact or sexual behavior with an employee, staff member, co-worker or volunteer. Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender (*Book of Discipline*, ¶ 161.II.I). Sexual harassment must also be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue.

C. Clergy Sexual Misconduct:

Sexual misconduct within the ministerial relationship involves a betrayal of sacred trust, a violation of the ministerial role and exploitation of those who are vulnerable. Those clergy who serve within the Desert Southwest Annual Conference and are employed by the Annual Conference will be subject to the "Policies and Procedures for Dealing with Clergy Sexual Misconduct" (Policy 0.). Within that policy are procedures that will be followed as to how to report sexual misconduct and how investigation will occur as well as the process for reconciliation and rehabilitation.

D. Procedures for non-clergy Staff or employees and Sexual Misconduct:

1. When incidents of sexual misconduct are brought to the attention of a supervisor, funding agency or the Conference Personnel Committee, the greatest possible care should be taken to assure that the least possible additional harm be done to both the complainant and to the accused.
   Any employee who feels that (s)he has been the victim of sexual misconduct should contact the Personnel Officer or the Conference Personnel Committee (chairperson) within fifteen (15) days of the incident. This report can be oral or written, but a written and signed statement of the complaint must be submitted by the complaining employee within three (3) days of the initial report before an investigation can proceed.
2. Persons accused of sexual misconduct are to be considered innocent until the accusation has been substantiated beyond a reasonable doubt.
3. For the protection of those involved (including the complainant or complainant's family and the accused and the family of the accused) confidentiality shall be maintained until all facts have been carefully considered and appropriate actions determined.
4. When sexual misconduct is alleged, the following procedures will be followed:
   a. In the case of non-clergy employees or staff, a written grievance shall be brought to the funding agency or the Conference Personnel Committee.
   b. All parties, including the complainant and the respondent, may bring a support person to any meeting or hearing at any point in the process.
   c. Request permission from the aggrieved person to use the written grievance, and their name in discussion with the accused; if unwilling, the funding agency or Conference Personnel Committee shall share the grievance with the accused while protecting the anonymity of the aggrieved.
   d. When there is a receipt of the written complaint, the Personnel Officer or the Conference Personnel Committee will contact the person who allegedly initiated the sexual misconduct and inform that person of the basis of the complaint and the opportunity to respond within seven (7) days to the complaint in writing.
   e. Upon receipt of the written response, the Personnel Officer or the Conference Personnel Committee, after conducting a thorough investigation, will submit in writing a confidential summary of the complaint, the response, and the facts of the investigation to the executive committee of the funding agency for their information and advice. The executive committee of the funding agency, after conducting a thorough review of the facts of the investigation, including possible interviews with all parties involved, will determine whether sexual misconduct has occurred. Both parties will be notified of their decision.
5. If it is determined that sexual misconduct has occurred, appropriate disciplinary action up to and including discharge will be taken. The severity of the discipline will be determined by the severity and frequency of the offense, or other conditions surrounding the incident.
6. An employee's failure to report the occurrence of sexual misconduct within fifteen (15) days of the occurrence may be deemed a waiver of any action by the DSC. Failure to file a written complaint within three (3) days of the verbal report will be considered a withdrawal of that report. If the person against whom the complaint of sexual misconduct is filed fails to respond to the complaint within seven (7) days of notification, the complaint will be taken as true, and the appropriate disciplinary measure will be taken if circumstances warrant.
7. If the process outlined in paragraph 4 does not resolve the complaint then the steps in the judicial process within The United Methodist Church as outlined in ¶¶ 2704.4 and 2706.4 in the *Book of Discipline* will be activated, "When the respondent is a lay person," and the procedures of a church trial will begin. This procedure shall be for both Exempt, and Non-exempt non-clergy employees of the Annual Conference. Lay members of any local United Methodist Church may serve on this committee. However, it is recommended that Lay Members be selected from churches where neither the complainant or the accused are either members or regular attenders.
8. If an Exempt or Non-exempt non-clergy employee is proven to have engaged in sexual misconduct, there will be an attempt at reconciliation and rehabilitation for that person. This can take the form of a program of continuing education, leave of absence, early retirement, personal counseling or therapy, private reprimand, or dismissal from employment.
9. If the offending person remains an employee of the Annual Conference, he or she may be expected to pay for counseling for the victims as part of the rehabilitative process. This shall be at the discretion of the

Conference Personnel Committee.

10. If it is determined that false reports or statements of sexual harassment have been made against the accused person, the complainant will be asked to make both a personal and, if appropriate, public apology to the one so falsely accused. If the complainant remains as an employee of the DSC, he or she may be expected to pay for counseling for the accused as part of the rehabilitative process: it also may be suggested that the one making the accusation undergo personal counseling or therapy.

C. GRANT AWARD GUIDELINES

1. Applicant to provide *Letter of Intent*

   The Letter of Intent provides an opportunity for review by all related parties of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference in determining potential for funding by the funding body. The letter should tell from whom the application originates, what the applicant is attempting to achieve, the amount of funding required and the purposes for which the funds will be used.

   Letters will be reviewed by the respective funding organization. Upon receipt of the Letter of Intent, the prospective funding organization will notify its intent regarding eligibility of application. In general funding will be made available four times per calendar year.

2. The Grant Review Process
   a. The respective funding organization shall review the Letter of Intent as described above. If a proposal is of interest to the funding organization, the applicant is encouraged to submit a full application.
   b. Applications will be reviewed by the funding organization to ensure that they are complete and each question is answered with sufficient information for further review.
   c. Recommendation will be made for one of the following actions: award, award with modification, or decline.
   d. If additional information is required of the applicant, the applicant may be contacted for an interview or site visit.
   e. Awarded applicants are notified and asked to sign letters of agreement specifying the payment schedule, reporting procedures, publicity, and any additional modifications to the proposal as specified by the funding body.
   f. Applicants who are declined will receive notice with information regarding denial.
3. Grant Requirements
   a. Name of Organization
   b. Name, Address, Telephone of Applicant
   c. Name of Applicant's authorized staff contact
   d. Title of Staff Contact
   e. Copy of applicant's 501(c)3 status if applicable and State Tax Exemption
   f. Copy of applicant's most recent audit
   g. List of members of governing board/body of applicant's organization
   h. Proposed detailed line item budget
   i. Detailed description of applicant's current ministry/program
   j. Detailed description of proposed ministry/program
      - Mission statement
      - Target audience
      - Purpose of ministry/program
      - Demonstrated need
      - Proposed outcome
      - Reporting structure of project completion and progress to funding body
      - Time line & project management description for ministry/program
      - Other sources of funding
   k. Criteria to determine that this ministry/program will succeed
   l. Criteria that will be used to evaluate the success of the ministry/program
   m. How specifically will the grant dollars be spent
   n. Grant application shall be submitted in triplicate to funding body

D. UNITED METHODIST DEVELOPMENT FUND GUARANTEED LOANS

The Guaranteed Loan Review Committee will review the loans guaranteed by the Annual Conference at United Methodist Development Fund (UMDF) or the United Methodist Federal Credit Union (UMFCU) on an annual basis.

In order to facilitate this process the following documentation will be submitted by the local church having the loan that is guaranteed by the Annual Conference. These reports should be sent by the local church to the Guaranteed Loan Review Committee by March 31.

1. Audited** Balance Sheet as of December 31 of the preceding year.
2. Audited** Income and Expense report for January 1 through December 31 of the preceding year for all accounts including general fund, pre-school, day school and building fund and any other income and expense for the church.
3. Current years' Income and Expense budget for all funds.
4. Debt service plans and projections (i.e. building fund, pledge drive, etc.)

*Guaranteed Loan Review Committee will be made up of two members from New Faith and Vital Faith Committees, two members from the Council on Finance and Administration, the Director of New and Vital Faith Communities, and the Conference Treasurer.
**Audited as defined in the *Book of Discipline* ¶ 258.4.d.

Congregational Development
UMDF Loan Application Process

In order for the Desert Southwest Conference to have an orderly procedure for processing applications going to UMDF, the following steps are to be followed. This is for all applications, not just the ones that require Desert Southwest Annual Conference guarantee. This is in order to not have a last-minute request come to the Committee when a guarantee is desired.

A. All loan applications with UMDF must come through the Office of New and Vital Faith Communities.
B. The application must be accompanied with the following documentation:
   1. Audited**Balance Sheet for the Church showing all accounts including day schools, etc.
   2. Audited** Income and Expense reports for all accounts for all accounts for up to three years including such activities as day school, preschool, building funds and any other financial activities of the Church.
   3. Current year Income and Expense budgets.
   4. Total contract amounts for building and how the whole package will be funded.
   5. Debt service plans and projections (i.e. building fund, pledge drive, etc.)
   6. Approval documentation by Church Building and Location and Church Charge Conference.

After approval of the application by Guaranteed Loan Review Committee* and signed off by the either the New Faith or Vital Faith Communities Committee it will be submitted to UMDF. If UMDF Annual Conference guarantee of loan the package will be submitted for joint approval of the guarantee by the Executive Committee of New Faith or Vital Faith Communities and the Council on Finance and Administration.
*Guaranteed Loan Review Committee will be made up of two members from New Faith or Vital Faith Communities Committees, two members from the Council on Finance and Administration, the Director of New and Vital Faith Communities and the Conference Treasurer.
**Audited as defined in the *Book of Discipline* ¶ 258.4.d.

E. MANUAL FOR CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Chartering a New Church

"Chartering" is the culmination of a process whereby a "fellowship" or a group of worshipers becomes an official United Methodist Church.
A fellowship or group of worshipers may apply to the Appointive Cabinet for chartering when the following guidelines have been discussed with their District Superintendent:

1. There is a clear vision and mission statement in place and understood by the congregation. That is, the congregation is able to answer the question of what its purpose is and what the community would miss if the congregation were not present.

2. A growth plan is articulated in writing, which includes how the church reaches out to new people and what system is in place for helping members grow as disciples.
3. The church has been worshiping weekly for at least three years with significant growth in worship over each previous year.
4. The congregation demonstrates it has sufficient resources to pass on its ministries to the next generation.
5. The congregation demonstrates how they are fulfilling God's dream for them in ministering with their community.
6. The church has the potential to receive at least another 50% membership above the chartering membership from their constituency role.
7. The church will submit a written plan that shows how the church is organized.
8. The copies of the following documents will be presented by the church to the District Superintendent and Director of New and Vital Faith Communities or other staff assigned to new church starts: articles of incorporation, structure outline, list of officers, current program listing, budget, finance report, worship bulletins, mission statement and ministry plan.

When the above criteria have been reviewed and the application for chartering has been approved by the majority of the Appointive Cabinet, then the District Superintendent will consult with the Bishop, Appointive Cabinet and Director of New and Vital Faith Communities (or equivalent) in order to set the date for a constituting church conference. This conference will normally be led by the Bishop with the District Superintendent and Director of New and Vital Faith Communities present.

The period during which members may join as charter members will be set at the constitution conference and may be up to twelve months following that conference.

Procedures for Evaluating New Churches

1. When the Appointive Cabinet recommends to the New Faith Communities Committee a new church project, there shall accompany the recommendation documentation which supports the need for the new project.
2. When a covenant is established between a local church and the Annual Conference (through the New Faith Communities Committee) at the time of certification, the covenant must be approved by the Administrative council of the local church (or its equivalent if not established).
3. The New Faith Communities Committee must review and approve the covenant before certification is granted.
4. In addition to monthly performance reports from each new church, the New Faith Communities Committee will review annually the church's performance with respect to the covenant, such evaluation being done in behalf of the Board by an Evaluation Committee, which will become a standing committee of the New Faith Communities Committee.
5. When covenant projections have not been met by a church, a special committee will visit with the pastor and Administrative Council to determine the reasons or root causes, what adjustments need to be made either in the projections or performance (or both), and whether the church should be continued or discontinued.
6. The Evaluation Committee shall be composed of: the District Superintendent in whose district the church is located; the Director of New and Vital Faith Communities (or its equivalent); one participant from the district approved by the local church; two members of the Evaluation Committee of the New Faith Communities Committee.

APPENDIX A
PROCESS FOR NEW BUILDINGS

Long-Range Planning Committee - appointed by the Administrative Board/Council

1. Conduct needs assessment regarding facilities for ministry.

1st Charge/Church Conference

Determines possible need and selects building committee that will:

1. Determine financial resources.
2. Hire architect; contract only for preliminary phase.
3. Begin screening contracting options.
4. Formulate preliminary financial and preliminary building plans and site plan.

5. Meet with District Board of Church Location and Building to present site and preliminary finance and building plans. The finance plans must align with the Conference rules as follows:
   a. The church should have 1/3 of the projected cost of the total project on hand prior to signing a contract with the builder. This can be done a number of ways, (i.e. Miracle Sunday; completion of finance campaign, outright gifts).
   b. The church should have a building drive for generally 3-year pledges that will cover the monthly payments of the amount to be borrowed, which is usually between 1/2 to 2/3 of the total cost of the project.
   c. The church should not borrow more than 2/3 of the total cost of the project under a long-term loan.
   d. The debt retirement payments should not be more than 1/3 of the general budget, (i.e., if the general budget is $100,000, the debt retirement in a separate fund should not be more than $33,333).
   e. The length of the loan should be for 15 years or less. (Ten years or less is highly recommended.)

2nd Charge/Church Conference

1. Approve preliminary financial and building plans and site plan with any modifications.
2. The building committee should meet again with the District Board of Church Location and Building to present the plans at this stage.
3. The church then:
   a. Completes finance campaign.
   b. Hires architect for executing final building plans.
   c. Completes final financial and building plans.

3rd Charge/Church Conference

1. Approve final finance and building plans.
2. The building committee meet with the Board of Church Location and Building to secure final approval of the finance and building plans.
3. The church then:
   a. Hires contractor.
   b. Secures loan.
   c. Supervises architect and contractor.

CONSECRATION CELEBRATION!

APPENDIX B
PARTNERSHIP CONGREGATIONS

Partnership congregations occur where an existing congregation becomes partners with a new church development or church vitalization project. Partnership congregations provide church-to-church and people-to-people support in these areas:

1. **Prayer**. Prayer needs to be an integral part of all activities undertaken by the new ministry. A prayer chain with participation by members from both congregations might be organized for the overall project.
2. **Membership**. The partnership congregation may commission some of its own members to become a part of the new or vitalizing congregation, either temporarily or permanently.
3. **Organization**. Networking of people in similar staff or volunteer positions such as Christian education, missions, and evangelism will maximize learning, enthusiasm and productivity.
4. **Program**. A major area of program support might be for the partnership congregation to lend its choir, instrumentalists, or soloists on occasion.
5. **Administration**. Support such as printing of flyers or bulletins and typing of letters would be very helpful to a congregation that may have limited office space, if any, and only volunteers or no secretary at all.
6. **Financial**. New churches need help for basic operating expenses during their first three years because much of this expense cannot be covered out of the new church's offerings. Some additional financial assistance may be needed for expansion costs such as land and buildings. Vitalization congregations vary greatly in the amount of assistance they require from outside sources.

Besides these visible and material ways of helping the new church or vitalization church, the relationships built between members of the partner congregations can help forge channels for communication of information and new opportunities for Christian fellowship.

Project Development Committee

The Local Project Development Committee is the means by which there can be coordination between one or several

partnership congregations and the new or redeveloping church. The guidelines for such a committee may be as follows:

1. The Project Development Committee is initiated and convened by the District Superintendent. An initial decision must be made by the partnership congregation's Council on Ministries and Administrative Board or Administrative Council as to the vitalization or new project in which it would like to participate.
2. A project committee will be appointed by the District Superintendent. Some committee members will represent the partnership congregation(s), and some will be added to represent the project being developed as it receives members. Its responsibility will be to design and implement the plan of vitalization or new development. The committee will elect its own chair. The committee will then meet regularly, updating the New Faith Communities Committee on a quarterly basis.
3. The committee will act as a vital communications link between the partnership and developing congregations, stimulating enthusiasm and motivation for the project as well as funneling resources and personnel to the project as necessary.

Relations with other Conference Agencies

The New and Vital Faith Communities Committees look at the development of new ministries and vitalization of existing ministries in a comprehensive manner, and as such, desires input from many other Conference agencies. Several of those agencies have representatives as ex-officio members of these committees. The group most directly involved with issues in congregational development is the Board of Global Ministries. The committees responsible for congregational development and Global Ministries seek to be sensitive in planning new ministries in urban areas so that Urban Ministries' programs and Congregational Development programs enhance and complement one another. The Board of Discipleship is also critical to the activities of congregational development. Church growth and evangelism are intimately tied to the understanding of developing congregations to minister to groups of people not presently being reached. Joint training and sharing of ideas are beneficial to both groups. The Council on Finance and Administration has an important job of looking at financial commitments made by the New and Vital Faith Communities Committees in relationship to all other Conference commitments so that the Conference is not financially over-extended. The Conference Board of Trustees hold title to all the property and are responsible along for the management of that property; it is important to bring the Trustees in at the point when a new property purchase has been approved. The New and Vital Faith Communities Committees shall work in cooperation with all other Conference agencies at all times so that church vitalization and new church development enhance and complement the program and administrative work of the rest of the Conference.

APPENDIX C

Vitalization of the Local Church

Goal: To enable a local church to come to a new understanding of itself, of the community in which it is located, of the church's opportunity to meet human needs, and to bring about a new personal excitement, readiness, and commitment to be in ministry.

Plan: At the request of a local church to become involved in the vitalization program of the Annual Conference, a team of consultants will be assigned to work with the church, guiding it through a process to achieve the above goal. The consultant team will be composed of trained, qualified persons who are volunteers, expecting to only have their expenses paid.

Costs: Since no salaries are to be paid to consultants, the costs will relate only to expenses incurred. These expenses will be met by the local church. Funds for assisting local churches are available through the Vital Faith Communities Committee.
Churches needing assistance may request such financial aid.

Process:

1. Local churches request information from the Conference Director of New and Vital Faith Communities or District Superintendents about the Vitalization Program.
2. Presentation of the program to the local church Council on Ministries and Administrative Board or Administrative Council.
3. Decision by the Church Conference to become involved in the program.
4. Vital Faith Communities Committee assignment of Consultant Team to the local church (done in consultation with pastor, Administrative Board or Council chairperson, District Superintendent, and Director of New and Vital Faith Communities).
5. Consultants meet with local church pastor and leaders to review stages of the process and develop a

schedule.

6. Congregational meeting to introduce Consultant Team, outline the vitalization program and enable the congregation to "buy into" the process.
7. Establish task forces to gather information and data such as:
   a. Vital life-signs of the local church.
   b. Profile of the community.
   c. Image of local church in the community.
8. Period of approximately four weeks for data gathering and theological undergirding.
9. Consultants and leaders of task forces review and digest information gathered and establish plans for Congregational Retreat.
10. Congregational Retreat to review all information, prioritize areas of outreach, determine directions and goals for local church, and to celebrate decisions.
11. Consultants meet with local church leaders to develop specific plans of implementation, including resources available through the Annual Conference.
12. Three months after the Congregational Retreat, a meeting is scheduled with consultants and local church leaders to evaluate progress, followed by a local church report to their District Superintendent and Director of New and Vital Faith Communities.

F. DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR STARTING CHURCHES THROUGH MULTIPLICATION

"In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent *them off." Acts 3:1-3*

To be sent out to birth new churches is the work we have now been called to do in the Desert Southwest Conference. In an "evangelistic" way, this demonstrates the Christian value of **"spiritual parenting"** both in raising new leaders and in launching new churches.

Definition of a New Church:

In order to allow for maximum creativity and movement of the Spirit, the Desert Southwest Conference joins Path 1 in defining new churches in terms of key characteristics instead of strategies or models. We believe a new church is **more than a mission project**, **new worship service or a new building.** For us it is a newly organized faith community that is committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ *and*:

1. Includes regular community worship and regular celebration of sacraments
2. Practices Wesleyan theology within a United Methodist identity and commitment
3. Has an effective discipling system
4. Receives new members
5. Demonstrates faithful stewardship
6. Is deeply involved in community transformation
7. Is willing to plant a new church in its first decade

Within these broad characteristics United Methodist churches find freedom to partner in creative ways to begin new congregations.

Our Mission: "Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

Rationale: One of the very best ways to make disciples is by starting new congregations because they reach new people, more people, more young people and more diverse people. In other words, new people of all categories are more likely to join new churches. For fifty years, between 1870 and 1920, the Methodists averaged one new church start a day and by so doing became the largest and strongest denomination in our country.

Today it is even more crucial to start new churches for the following reasons:

1. In the last fifty years the population has dramatically "grown" and "shifted" in the United States. Many of those churches planted earlier are not close to where the people now live. It is estimated that 75 percent of our existing churches are not located in our most populated communities.
2. It is very difficult for long established churches to adapt to fundamental demographic shifts in their communities so that their membership, worship attendance and ministries reflect today's mission needs and not those of bygone eras. In other words we need new places for new faces.

3. New churches are more open to all kinds of people inclusive of race, sexual identity, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, nationality, and gender.
4. New churches find it easier than established churches to live out new models of mission and ministry.
5. "Evangelistic intensity" tends to decrease as the age of the congregation increases. New churches know they must attract new people every week.
6. All churches have a life cycle of birth, infancy, adolescence, maturity, declining years, and death. Therefore, churches need to have an intentional plan to multiply while they are still alive and healthy.

A Developing Plan for the Vision of Starting 100 New Churches through Multiplication

The following are initial steps to take in the development of a new plan for churches that want to multiply themselves.

1. Challenge every United Methodist Church to multiply itself. This challenge comes from the Bishop, the District Superintendent, the Pastor, the Director of New and Vital Faith Communities and the New Faith Communities Team.
2. Call upon God and the Holy Spirit to bless this endeavor in a "season of prayer" and use the "Readiness to Plant" tool in each multiplying church.
3. Assemble a New Church Ministries Team in each District to assist the District Superintendent in visioning and leading and for support and coordination of the multiplying churches. This team will also assist in site selection, resourcing and assessment issues as well as benchmarking.
4. For those churches that say "yes" to multiplication there are two basic steps to take. First, contact the District Superintendent who informs the district's **New Church Ministries Team** which will then give support and coordination to the multiplication project. Second, within the church itself, assemble two new teams: a "Prayer Team" to pray weekly for the success of the multiplication because nothing substantial happens in the way of changed lives without the work of the Holy Spirit: assemble a "New Church Start Development Team" led by the pastor to devise their particular plan for implementation including timeline.
5. District and conference celebration of the church's launching of a new church.

Proposed models and examples of multiplication

There are seven proposed models: multi-sites, mother-daughter, cross-cultural churches within a church, multi-ethnic, various house church models, second and third campuses, and a new church within an existing church model. Each church can select one of these models, adapt one, or create a new model for multiplying.

Leadership for these models will come from predominant sources 1) the existing staff of a church which may include clergy (full, part-time, or retired) and 2) the laity of the church. In either case, additional equipping (teaching and training) will be needed for both the existing church and the new church start leadership. Examples of this training are: Boot Camp, Readiness to Plant document, Lay Missionary Planting Network, or the New Church Leaders Institute.

Leaders for church planting should possess many of the following characteristics: hard-working, entrepreneurial, self-starters, passionate, and have previous experiences starting new ventures. It will also be very important to match leadership with the mission field. This is called the "affinity" issue. The key question for the affinity match is "Will the people in the targeted mission field be attracted to this person?" and not "Does this person like the people in the mission field?"

Examples of how the models may be used by churches that choose to multiply themselves are the following:

- Mother-daughter plant A--the parent church gives birth to a new church start from within and maintains relationship with mother church through infancy, adolescence, and adulthood.
- Mother-daughter plant B--the parent church stays with the new church only through infancy then develops its own identity in adolescence.
- Monastic-house church A--has 10 to 15 people meeting together on a regular basis once a week or more for worship, Bible study and outreach into the community. These churches are connected to an anchor church.
- Monastic house church B--six to ten people that live in a house and commit themselves to rules of life such as "do no harm, do good, stay in love with God" and work at community transformation each week. These churches are connected as well to a larger anchor church.
- House church plant C--several house churches gather monthly who have own identity, weekly intentional faith development, and engage in community outreach, but agree to divide when individually they reach twenty members. The monthly gatherings can be at an anchor church.

- Intentional cross-cultural new church plant--the leadership reflects two or more main cultures of the targeted mission field. For example, an existing Hispanic-Latino church in an area that also has a high percentage of African Americans would want to start a new church for them in the current facilities with African American leadership.
- Multi-site church plant--an existing church decides to have additional but different worship services in other areas of their mission field or city.
- Second or third campus plant--an existing church decides to conduct similar worship experiences in different areas of their mission field or city.
- Church within a church plant--an aging and declining church with good facilities offers to host a new church making its primary resources of time and buildings available so the fledging church can grow to adulthood.
- Multi-racial plant--this is where the leadership from the very beginning is multi-racial in its make-up. At least 20% of the congregation must be of a different race or nationality to be considered a multi-racial congregation.
- Cross cultural church--existing church decides to start a new church for a particular demographic group i.e. a "cowboy" church.

Responsibilities of the local church

1. Develop a "Prayer Team" to pray unceasingly for the success of the multiplication effort.
2. Choose a model. Responsibilities of the local church will depend upon the model chosen which will dictate whether it is leadership, members, financial, facilities or any combination of these.
3. In any of the models chosen, the use of the "Readiness to Plant" material is vitally important. This material looks at the church's capacity for fruitful planting in five key areas; "leadership readiness," "vision alignment," "evangelistic aptitude," "passionate spirituality," and "cultural openness."
4. Contact the District Superintendent when a decision is made to multiply in order to work with the District's New Church Ministry Team for coordination and support.
5. Within the church, assemble a New Church Start Development Team of passionate lay persons led by the pastor to devise a plan for implementation with timeline. Suggested books to read: "*Exponential*" by Dave & Jon Ferguson, "*Be Fruitful & Multiply*" by Robert Logan, and "*Planting New Churches in a Post Modern Age*" by Ed Stetzer.

Responsibilities of the Districts

1. Each district has a new church ministry team of 4-6 leaders who are passionate and committed to reaching new people through starting new churches with at least one younger person.
2. Persons on this team should have: a deep commitment to Christ Jesus, The United Methodist Church and the making of disciples for Jesus; previous experience in new church starts; potential for raising funds for new church starts and be part of growing church.
3. The purpose is to develop and execute strategic plans for starting new churches including: the mission field location, leadership requirements and assessments, the "affinity" issue, benchmarking, mentoring and coaching, timing and launching, the church's readiness to plant, ministry partners and resourcing. This team serves as a connecting point for all individuals, churches, conference and general work in church planting in the district.
4. Be accountable to the District Superintendent/Appointive Cabinet and resourced by the New and Vital Faith Communities Committee and its Director.

Responsibilities of the Conference

The conference will be a partner in these new church starts by providing collaboration, demographic information, guidance, supervision, leadership, and other appropriate resources.

1. The Conference develops an assessment team led by the Director of New and Vital Faith Communities.
   - The purpose of which is to evaluate and assess potential church planters for general ability and affinity to specific church planting projects, report and make available a pool of potential church planters to the Appointive Cabinet as well as potential sites for church planting.
2. A pool of pre-screened potential church planters is created.
   - Make use of the Lay Missionary Planting Network (LMPN)* in helping to establish this pool.
   - 10-20 lay or clergy leaders who have been assessed for fitness and trained in the basics of starting a new church.

- Leaders in this pool would be given preference in appointment to new churches and to churches that are starting new churches.
- The pool would be evaluated annually and receive ongoing training.

Role of the Conference New Faith Communities Committee

1. Coordinates, revises, and resources this plan in collaboration with the Bishop/Appointive Cabinet and Director of New and Vital Faith Communities.
2. The chair (or representative) of each District New Church Ministry Team serves as a member on the New Faith Communities Committee.

*LMPN- a new approach to starting churches through the assigning of passionate, talented, and trained lay persons, drawing us back to our Wesleyan roots. The belief is that gifted and called lay people can and will effectively lead new congregations.

Responsibilities of the General Church

Our United Methodist Strategy Team for starting new churches named "Path 1" is available for the following:

- Contextualized Conference Strategic Planning
- Jurisdictional and National Equipping Events for the "training and teaching" of new church planters
- New church start multiplication training for existing churches
- Use of a cadre of "certified" United Methodist new church start mentor coaches for each new church start planter
- Providing resources for assisting in the successful "launch" of a new church start

Path 1 is eager to build relationships with conferences and jurisdictions that may make funds or additional leadership available in the future for the planting of new churches.

Internal Steps and Dates

The Desert Southwest Conference will build district teams capable of launching at least 10 new churches each year.

- District Superintendents identify and recruit district-level.
- Train district teams and DS's and have the team read study materials on new church starts such as "Exponential."
- Train all clergy and key lay persons about multiplication.
- Have a training event for local congregations: Developing a Church Planting Proposal.
- Resource district teams with encouragement and attention (ongoing).
- Have ongoing coaching (new church pastors, etc.).
- Quarterly reporting to Bishop and Extended Cabinet.

Resourcing the Local Church

Possible approaches:

- Large Church Pastors meeting/Mid-size
- LMPN training
- Receive ideas on how it could happen here
- Marketing Tools
- Demographic information, which would include what other denominations are present
- Collaborative work with other denominations
- Develop a web-presence in each district on resources for starting new churches

Conclusion: *A Tale of Two Churches* by Ed Stetzer

A study of Acts reveals that laypersons affected early church planting (8:1, 4). They performed mass evangelism (8:5-6, 12) as well as village evangelism (8:25). Through this lay movement, churches multiplied (9:31) and salvation reached increasing numbers of Gentiles (10:44-48). Later, lay Christians from Jerusalem witnessed about Christ and planted a Gentile-Jewish church in Antioch (Acts 11:20-21).

The founding of the Antioch church may be the most important moment in church planting history. Antioch would send missionaries throughout the world. Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the Antioch church became the first great missionary-sending church (Acts 13:3). On the other hand, the Jerusalem church turned increasingly inward and lost much of its vision, finally disappearing like the Judaizers of the early Christian movement. In contrast, the Antioch congregation reached the world by becoming the first church planting church! They did this by sending out their very best leaders and by contributing 'significant' amounts of money for the establishment of new congregations.

All of the above information is aimed at providing the framework for those that want to be the multiplying "Antioch" churches of our day and helping them achieve great success.
"*They fasted and prayed; they placed their hands on them and sent them off." Acts 13:3*

G. CLERGY HOUSING POLICIES AND STANDARDS

A. RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The ultimate responsibility for clergy housing lies with the Administrative Board/Council of the local church, with shared immediate responsibility given to the Staff Parish Relations Committee/Parsonage Committee and the Board of Trustees.
2. The responsibilities of the Staff Parish Relations Committee shall include:
   - **a.** Sensitizing the congregation to the fact that 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.
   - **b.** The chairperson of the Staff Parish Relations Committee along with the chairperson of the Trustees and the pastor shall make an annual review of church-owned clergy housing. Following appropriate action by the Staff Parish Relations Committee and Trustees, the review form shall be submitted to the District Superintendent.
   - **c.** Follow the Parsonage Maintenance Guidelines "When There is a Change in Clergy Appointment."
   - **d.** Assure that all budget requests pertaining to the parsonage are submitted to the above-mentioned groups for recommendation for inclusion within the budget.
   - **e.** Recommend the amount of a housing allowance, if one is provided, and determine that it is within the requirements of the I.R.S.
   - **f.** Submit to the Administrative Board/Council the proper resolution establishing the Housing Maintenance allowance within the guidelines established by the I.R.S. This allowance is available for parsonage and clergy-owned housing.
   - **g.** Arrange for the rental of a parsonage, if that is needed, to house the pastor and family.

B. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. It should be remembered that a home expresses character and that the condition of the parsonage reflects on the relations of the clergy family and the church. Happy is the pastor who can be proud of his/her church for the kind of parsonage provided for his/her use. Happy is the church whose parsonage family cares for the home provided for them as good stewards.
2. There shall be an annual review of the parsonage as noted in Section A.2.b.
3. Clergy families living in a church-owned parsonage are expected to maintain the parsonage in conditions of reasonable cleanliness and repair, avoiding the necessity of extensive cleaning or repair upon the change of pastors.
4. With the change of pastors, the clergy family shall be responsible to clean the parsonage and make it available for the new pastor's family. Any cleaning expense shall be borne by the clergy family (excluding carpets and draperies).
5. When a change of pastors is anticipated, this is an appropriate time for the church to consider repainting, new carpets and/or new draperies. The responsibility for the cost of any unusual repairs resulting from the clergy family's lifestyle shall be negotiated between the Staff Parish Relations and Trustees committees and the clergy family.
6. The church is encouraged to consider the tastes of the parsonage family in choosing colors and appliances.

C. MINIMUM PARSONAGE STANDARDS:

1. The parsonage should be an adequate and comfortable home for the pastor and family.
2. It should be located so it will be conducive to good living and accessible to good shopping areas, school and to the church.
3. There should be a minimum of three bedrooms, each of adequate size and allowing for privacy, and providing adequate closet space and storage space.
4. There should be a minimum of one and 3/4 bathrooms.
5. A dining area should be adequate for formal dining and entertaining.
6. The living room should be large enough so that entertaining or dining is possible if desired.
7. The kitchen should be adequate and large enough for a family eating area.
8. There should be an area where the family can "be at ease" and out of the usual traffic pattern whether it is a

kitchen-family room, a den, or a recreation room.

9. The parsonage will be furnished by the church with major appliances, carpets and window coverings and will be maintained and replaced when necessary. Major appliances shall include a sink with garbage disposal, built-in dishwasher, stove, oven, microwave, washer/dryer, and refrigerator.
10. There should be adequate shelter for the pastor's car, preferable a two-car area provided.
11. All existing parsonages need to be reviewed in light of minimum standards. Efforts should be made to develop a plan to upgrade the existing parsonage to the plan.
12. Where the church provides acceptable furnishing, but the clergy prefers to use their own, the clergy family is responsible for the cost of storage for the church-owned furnishings.

D. PARSONAGE MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES:

1. The parsonage shall be reviewed annually for maintenance needs, including exterior inspection and interior inspection. All interior and exterior maintenance of the parsonage is the responsibility of the local church. See Section A.2.b.
2. An emergency fund should be available in an amount that could be spent without consultation with the Finance Committee in order to deal with emergency repairs.
3. Termite control should be maintained on the parsonage.
4. Major renovation, repair and replacements should be done by the church as they are needed. The clergy family, not the church, should be responsible for correcting extreme or unusual damage caused by family negligence that is beyond normal depreciation.
5. Basic landscaping should be the responsibility of the church and professionally planned whenever possible. Basic ground cover (lawn and/or desert landscaping), shrubs, tools and equipment should be provided by the church. Routine yard care and maintenance should be negotiated between clergy family and church.
6. For the safety of the parsonage family, the church should carefully evaluate the overall security of the building and grounds. Included should be fire prevention measures such as smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, escape ladders where needed, a fire escape plan, and fencing for play areas and pets as needed.

E. CHANGING OF PASTORS:

1. The parsonage should be thoroughly inspected, repaired, and cleaned both inside and outside when there is a change of pastors. All should be in proper order. This is also a good time for a thorough inspection of plumbing and electrical wiring and appropriate repairs or replacements made. It is further recommended that a termite and pest control inspection be done at this time, and all necessary corrections be made through the proper church agencies.
2. The following suggestions are for creating a "guide" to be completed by the pastor, Staff Parish Relations Committee, and Board of Trustees which shall be given to the clergy family when it moves into the parsonage:
   a. For each appliance:
      1) Operating instructions or manuals, etc.
      2) Repair instructions and servicing, repair personnel to call, which if any Staff Parish Relations Committee/Trustees member to call. It is understood that service calls and repairs of major appliances owned by the church should be paid for by the church.
   b. Where to find:
      1) Sprinkler system valves
      2) Turn-off valve for gas
      3) Turn-off valves for outside and inside water
      4) Meters
      5) Fuse or switch boxes, circuit breakers and main switch - all properly labeled
      6) Size and change intervals for heating and cooling filters
      7) Various plants (bulbs, etc.) which are seasonal
      8) Any unusual appliances, equipment or household peculiarities
      9) Sewer clean outs
   c. Numbers to call in case of emergencies: Police, Fire, Ambulance, Insurance Company, etc.
3. When it is possible, the parsonage should be open for visitation by the newly appointed clergy family prior to the effective date of appointment.

F. PARSONAGE UTILITIES:

1. The local church shall provide utilities: water, electricity, gas and basic telephone (not including personal long-distance calls), sewage fees, trash and garbage collection fees.
2. This policy should be the same for both church-owned and clergy-owned or rented parsonages.

G. PARSONAGE INSURANCE:

1. Insurance in real and personal property is the responsibility of the church.
2. The insurance policies should be reviewed annually and maintained at an adequate amount of coverage.
3. The pastor shall be responsible for insuring all personal belongings including personal furniture, clothing, books, jewelry, art, silver, etc.

H. HOUSING ALLOWANCE IN LIEU OF PARSONAGE:

1. It is deemed proper by the Annual Conference for a local church to offer and the pastor to accept a housing allowance in lieu of a provided parsonage.
2. Such an agreement is the responsibility of the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee to be determined in cooperation with the pastor. Where the church owns a parsonage, the Board of Trustees will need to be consulted as to the utilization of a parsonage which is not used by a pastor.
3. Where a parsonage is provided by the church, the church would continue to pay all costs for the maintenance of the house as if the pastor were living in it. In such a case the housing allowance shall be at least the fair market rental value of the parsonage.
4. Housing/Rental Allowance is limited to the lesser of (1) the amount of the housing/rental allowance designated by the local congregation, (2) the amount actually expended by the pastor to provide his/her housing including furnishings and utilities, or (3) the fair rental value of the housing provided
5. Unless legally dictated otherwise, this housing allowance income is not to be deemed a part of compensation for income tax purposes.
6. It is the policy of the Annual Conference for a church to own a parsonage if desired. The church may be free to sell that house if the pastor is not living in it for the purpose of buying another house as a parsonage. Should the house be sold (and a new one not purchased) proceeds shall be placed in an interest-bearing account. If there is another outstanding loan on other church property, the principal could be used to pay off that loan. If there is no other church debt on property, then the proceeds from the principal cannot be used for anything except to purchase another parsonage or for other church property capital improvements. The Appointive Cabinet has the authority to grant an exception to this rule.

I. PARSONAGE PURCHASES AND PERSONAL LOANS TO CLERGY:

1. Any sale of a parsonage owned by a local church or entity thereof to a pastor who has been appointed to that charge (or anyone directly related) shall be done in accordance with the appropriate disciplinary provisions governing church property and shall be reviewed and approved by a committee composed of a member of the Appointive Cabinet named by the Bishop, a member of the Board of Ordained Ministry named by the Board, who shall convene the committee and serve as chair, a member of the Conference Board of Trustees named by the Trustees, a member of the Council on Finance & Administration, and a lay member with experience in business and accounting practices nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Annual Conference. This committee shall be called the Housing and Loan Review Committee. The purpose of this committee is to assure that the long-term fiduciary interests of the local church and Annual Conference are protected and that the terms and conditions of such purchases conform to standard business and accounting practices. The Committee may consult with the appropriate District Building and Location Committee and the Chancellor of the Annual Conference.
2. The Housing and Loan Review Committee shall also review annually and approve the terms and conditions of any personal loans to clergy by the local church or entity thereof to assure that the fiduciary interests of the local church are protected and that standard business and accounting practices are followed. In accordance with accepted professional ethical practices in an itinerant appointive system, financial relationships shall not extend beyond the tenure of appointment to a particular charge. Such personal loans are highly discouraged.

J. HOUSING FOR CONFERENCE STAFF:

1. Housing for applicable clergy on conference staff will be by housing allowance only. The Annual Conference will not provide parsonages.

2. Housing allowances, where applicable, will be established yearly by Conference Finance and Administration in consultation with the Appointive Cabinet.

H. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CLERGY SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Preamble:

All clergy[1] are responsible for maintaining the credibility, integrity, and practice of the Christian faith. The best solution to the problem of clergy sexual misconduct is self-discipline and responsible behavior by each clergyperson. Such conduct takes Christian standards and ordination vows seriously. Personal integrity and mature and professionally responsible conduct must be brought to all relationships by every clergy in the Annual Conference. Every professional counseling practice prohibits inappropriate behavior. All clergy, single or married, should develop healthy personal relationships. The goal of married clergy must be to develop and maintain healthy marriages. When relational and sexual difficulties are present in one's personal and/or professional life, counseling should be sought. Mature professionals recognize that they are, by nature, of their role as well as by the esteem they are held in by parishioners or clients, in a position of power; and furthermore, this power can be exercised for self-interest as well as in the interest of those who trust them.

When sexual misconduct occurs, there are many victims: the spouses, children and other members of the family of the persons who are involved are victims; congregations who must live with the interpersonal and community impact of inappropriate sexual behavior are victims. All these victims are not part of the disciplinary and restorative procedure of the ordained ministry; yet all are hurt when sexual misconduct has occurred. Those who take the connectional covenant seriously and who value the vows of ordination, assume responsibility for the whole church in the way they live with their sexuality.

Clergy who serve in parishes where their predecessor has been sexually irresponsible find themselves living with the consequences arising from the misconduct of a brother or sister. When friends in the ministry conduct themselves inappropriately, there is a tension between caring for a personal friend involved in sexual misconduct and caring for the health and authenticity of the clergy person. All clergy are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the covenant we share together.

I. Introduction and Background

A. Ordination, consecration and membership in an Annual Conference in The United Methodist Church is a sacred trust and a position of power and responsibility. The qualifications and duties of diaconal ministers, local pastors, associate members, probationary members, and full members are set forth in the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church[2], and we believe they flow from the gospel as taught by Jesus Christ and proclaimed by his Apostles. Whenever a person in any of the above categories, including those on leaves of all types, honorable or administrative location, or retirement, is accused of violating this trust, the membership of their[3] office shall be subject to review. The intent of this policy is to provide for the safety of parishioners, protect the special relationship between pastor and parishioner, and ensure the health and authenticity of the ordained ministry.

B. Definition of Clergy Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct is an abuse of power and a breach of professional and pastoral ethics. Sexual misconduct may include sexual harassment, contact activity, (not limited to sexual intercourse), in which the clergyperson violates the free choice or takes advantage of the vulnerability of any person.

Sexual misconduct breaks the sacred trust inherent in ordination.[4] Any such misconduct shall be considered to be an offense by the clergyperson who then bears the responsibility of their behavior. Sexual misconduct often is not an outwardly forceful misuse of power, but may include behavior meant to induce a parishioner, client, church staff person, or colleague into a consensual sexual relationship. It, in fact, may include participating in sexual behavior instigated by a parishioner, etc.

C. Standards for Clergy Conduct

The following are standards which underlie this policy and its definition of sexual misconduct by clergy.

1. Clergy are responsible for the emotional, spiritual, and physical health of themselves and of those persons who come to them for help or over whom they have any kind of influence. Breach of this protective relationship is unethical and can become abusive.
2. Because clergy often deal with individuals who are emotionally and psychologically fragile or personally vulnerable, it is imperative that:
   a. the clergy themselves be healthy psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually;

b. they have adequate preparation and education for helping those individuals under their care and have continued supervision to deal with the inherent risks caused by dependency and/or transference.

D. The Expectations of the Covenantal Relationship of Clergy with the Church.

As Clergy, our covenant with the church is to:

1. Nurture and cultivate spiritual disciplines and patterns of holiness;

2. Be committed to and engage in leading the ministry of the whole church in loving service to humankind;

3. For the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness to the Christian gospel, and in consideration of (our) influence as a minister, be willing to make a complete dedication of (ourselves) to the highest ideals of Christian life;

4. Be persons in whom the community can place trust and confidence;

5. Be accountable to The United Methodist Church, accept its discipline and authority, abide by the demands of the special relationship of its ordained ministers, and be faithful to (our) vows as ordained ministers of the church of God.

II. Procedures

A. Assumptions Underlying Reports of Alleged Misconduct

1. When an aggrieved person reports to a clergy person an incident of sexual misconduct it is our responsibility to do our utmost to encourage and support aggrieved persons, and to urge the person to submit their complaint directly to the District Superintendent or the Bishop. In no case is the clergyperson to judge the validity of the reported complaint.

2. When bringing incidents of clergy misconduct into the appropriate forum, the greatest possible care should be taken to assure that the least possible additional harm is done to the complainant and to the accused.

3. Persons accused of sexual misconduct are to be considered innocent until the accusation has been substantiated beyond a reasonable doubt.

4. The protection of those involved, including the complainant or complainant's family, the accused and the accused's family, the congregation or institution, always shall be maintained.

B. When Sexual Misconduct is Alleged - Supervisory Response

When sexual misconduct is alleged, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. A written and signed complaint shall be brought to a District Superintendent or the Bishop by the offended party, or by someone who has verifiable knowledge, and is willing to pursue a resolution;

2. All parties, including the complainant and the respondent, shall be encouraged to bring a support person to any meeting or hearing at any point in the process;

3. A District Superintendent shall promptly:

a. share the complaint with the Bishop;

b. clarify and explain to the person bringing the complaint the process that will be followed in response to the complaint;

c. request permission from the complainant to use the written complaint, and their name in discussion with the accused. If the complainant is unwilling to be named, the superintendent shall share the complaint with the accused while protecting the anonymity of the complainant;

d. go to the clergyperson, with the complainant's knowledge, and share the allegations with the clergyperson:

1) present them with the written complaint;
2) explain the process to be followed, emphasizing the presumption of innocence and the right to due process;
3) receive their response to the complaint;
4) seek to substantiate the accusation or ascertain sufficient reason for pursuing the accusation further;
5) keep a written record of all meetings with all persons involved in the complaint process.

4. A complaint brought against a District Superintendent shall be submitted to the Bishop.

5. In case of a complaint against the Bishop, the process for investigation, as outlined in *Book of Discipline* will be followed.

6. The Bishop and the District Superintendent shall consider the appropriateness of informing the Staff-Parish Relations committee or the proper personnel supervisory body of the nature of the charges and the process being followed.

    a. In sharing the nature of the complaints, care shall be taken to protect the rights of all people involved;
    b. Any explanation to the congregation of the complaint involved shall be sufficiently complete to provide a clear understanding of the complaint and to protect persons from further misconduct.
  7. In order to protect the rights of the respondent and to protect the aggrieved person(s) and congregation from possible harm, the Bishop, with the recommendation of the Executive Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry may suspend the person from all clergy responsibilities, but not from an appointment, for a period not to exceed sixty days.
  8. The respondent is encouraged to use due process accorded to them by throughout the supervisory and judicial process; however, throughout the process the respondent may withdraw from membership of the Annual Conference under the *Book of Discipline*. The credential will be inscribed "withdrawn under complaint of sexual misconduct" by the Bishop and deposited with the Secretary of the Annual Conference. This action is reported to the Board of Ordained Ministry for confirmation by the Clergy Session of the Annual Conference at its next session.

C. Determination of Sufficient Cause
The Bishop will determine if there is sufficient cause for a complaint of sexual misconduct. If there is substance to the accusation, and resolution is not achieved through the supervisory process, the Bishop will refer the complaint as a judicial complaint in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*.

D. The Judicial Process of The United Methodist Church
  1. The Counsel for the Church
    a. Elder in full connection appointed by the Bishop
    b. Receives referral of complaint
    c. Signs and forwards complaint as a judicial complaint to the Committee on Investigation;
    d. Represents Church in any proceedings of the Committee on Investigation
  2. The Committee on Investigation
  The investigation procedure is the first step in the judicial process. The duties and procedures of the committee are outlined in the *Book of Discipline*.
  3. The Right to Trial
  Those against whom complaints are brought are innocent until proven guilty. The *Book of Discipline* outlines the trial procedures.

E. The Rights and Responsibility for the Victim(s)
If the respondent remains under ecclesiastical authority, they may be expected to pay for counseling for the victim(s) as part of the rehabilitative process. This will be assigned at the discretion of the Bishop. The Board of Ordained Ministry may choose to provide financial assistance. A list of qualified therapists shall be provided to the victim(s) of the misconduct. It is the Bishop's and District Superintendent's responsibility within thirty days to:
  1. Work with the present and/or new pastor to minimize further victimization by the attitudes and actions of the congregation;
  2. Initiate a process to seek healing and restoration for all of the victims including the abused persons, families, and the congregations involved.
  3. In order to facilitate the healing and restorative process, the respondent's District Superintendent and a District Superintendent chosen by the Bishop shall meet with the respondent's Staff-Parish Relations Committee or the appropriate Personnel Committee.

F. Records
When credentials have been surrendered the Clergy Session of the Annual Conference shall receive a report and a brief description of the charges or complaints and the disposition of them.
Full information of substantiated sexual misconduct and subsequent actions taken shall be kept in the clergyperson's permanent record in the Bishop's office.
Information of sexual abuse shall be shared with the respondent's successor and with the Staff-Parish Relations Committee or the appropriate personnel body as is wise and necessary. Confidentiality among all those concerned is expected.

[1] For the purposes of this policy, "clergy" refers to all persons ordained, commissioned, licensed, or consecrated.
[2] All references to the *Book of Discipline* are for the *Book of Discipline* for the current quadrennium.

[3] The pronoun "their" is used as a gender-neutral singular pronoun.
[4] For the purpose of this policy, "ordination" refers to ordination, commissioning, licensing, and consecration.

GLOSSARY

Sex discrimination is disparate treatment based on gender. Both sexual harassment and gender harassment are forms of sex discrimination.

Sexual harassment is defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual; or
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Gender harassment is unwelcome or unwanted conduct which is gender specific. Although not specifically "sexual," gender harassment may be recognized in patterns of behavior creating hostile or abusive working environments. Both sexual harassment and gender harassment are exploitations of power, and considered discrimination by law.

Sexual exploitation refers to unethical and, in some instances, unlawful behavior by a therapist or counselor through sexual contact with a client. Any sexual contact with a client or counselee is considered an exploitation of the professional role and the counselor's/therapist's responsibility to their client. Consent, or even initiation by the client is not a defense for sexual exploitation.

Clergy/Ministerial misconduct is a violation of sacred trust and the fiduciary responsibility of an ordained minister, local pastor or diaconal minister. When this violation involves sexual contact or "sexualized behavior," it may be called **clergy sexual misconduct.** Some relationships between so called "consulting adults" within the context of the Church may be clergy misconduct.

Sexual abuse is one form of sexual misconduct. While all forms of clergy sexual misconduct are unethical and a violation of our sacred trust, not all forms of sexual misconduct are necessarily abusive; e.g., an adulterous relationship between consenting adults who are not in a counseling relationship. Sexual abuse is a sexual invasion of the body. It may include verbal threats or physical assault. Sexual abuse may be: rape, sexual assault, incest, indecent exposure, statutory rape, involuntary or voluntary sexual intercourse with a child, promotion of prostitution, pornography with children, indecent assault, and aggravated indecent assault. Sexual abuse is also an internal assault, a deliberate violation of emotional integrity; a hostile, degrading act of violence.

Other terms used in policy:

Complainant: Person who initiated the complaint; person against whom the alleged offense occurred.

Respondent: Person against whom the complaint is lodged, i.e.-the accused.

Victim: When a complaint has been substantiated, all who have been adversely affected by the offense are considered to be victims.

I. YOUTH WORKER GUIDELINES

A "Worker with Youth" is an adult volunteer or staff person who works with youth in 6th grade through graduated 12th grade. This includes local church, District, Conference, and Camping events.

Guidelines for a "worker with youth" are:

A. Must be a high school graduate to work with junior high youth; must be at least 22 years of age to work with senior high youth OR if younger than the required age, they may be personally appointed by the adult coordinator of the event OR must be at least 4 years older than the oldest youth the event is designed for OR is a paid staff person of a local church who has been approved for the event by the Conference Staff Person relating to Youth Ministries.

B. Must have completed a local church, District, or Conference sponsored training event dealing with risk management.

C. Must have completed any required training for the specific event.