

**IN THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**IN THE MATTER OF
THE MEANING, APPLICATION, AND EFFECT OF
¶ 404.2 OF THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, 2020/2024**

**PETITION REQUESTING DECLARATORY DECISION AS TO
THE MEANING, APPLICATION, AND EFFECT OF
¶ 404.2 OF THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, 2020/2024**

The General Council on Finance and Administration (“GCFA”) submits this request for a declaratory decision as to the meaning, application, and effect of ¶ 404.2 of *The Book of Discipline, 2020/2024*.

Jurisdiction & Standing

The Judicial Council has “jurisdiction to make a ruling in the nature of a declaratory decision as to the constitutionality, meaning, application, and effect of the *Discipline* or any portion thereof or of any act of legislation of a General Conference” when petitioned by an authorized body. ¶ 2610.1. GCFA is “authorized to make such [declaratory] petitions to the Judicial Council” because GCFA is a “body created [and] authorized by the General Conference” seeking a declaration on “matters relating to or affecting [GCFA’s] work.” ¶ 2610.2. As explained below, ¶ 404.2¹ directs GCFA to take several actions alone and in concert with other interested parties, and a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council would “resolve doubts” about the scope and nature of those actions and permit GCFA to “proceed in keeping with church law.” R. Prac. & Proc., App’x B, available at:

¹ A copy of ¶ 404.2 as amended by General Conference 2020/2024 and codified by the Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision is attached as **Exhibit A**.

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/judicial-council/what-we-do/rules-of-practice-and-procedure>.

GCFA's Board of Directors authorized this request for a declaratory decision as to the meaning, application, and effect of ¶ 404.2 focusing on the questions raised in this Petition. (See Excerpts from November 2025 GCFA Board Meeting Minutes, attached as **Exhibit B**.)

Interested Parties

GCFA is one of many interested parties. Others include the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy ("IJCOE"), the Council of Bishops, the Northeastern Jurisdiction, the Southeastern Jurisdiction, the North Central Jurisdiction, the South Central Jurisdiction, the Western Jurisdiction, the Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy for those jurisdictions, and the Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision.

Factual Background

The General Conference rewrote ¶ 404.2 in a series of separate votes during the afternoon plenary session on April 30, 2024, acting on two calendar items and offering amendments and explanations from the floor. (See General Conference's Afternoon Proceedings for April 30, 2024 ("Apr. 30 Proceedings"), attached as **Exhibit C**; Legislative History of Calendar Item 547 ("Item 547"), attached as **Exhibit D**; Legislative History of Calendar Item 546 ("Item 546"), attached as **Exhibit E**.) That legislative work and the subsequent editorial work of the Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision established a novel process for

determining the number of bishops for each jurisdiction, calculating the costs of those bishops and their offices, and recommending a quadrennial budget, raising significant questions for GCFA and other authorized agencies tasked with implementing that new process. *See supra* at 7.

At 5:27 p.m., the General Conference replaced the text of ¶ 404.2² by passing an amended form of Item 547 that guaranteed each jurisdiction at least five bishops while providing a mechanism for any jurisdiction to request “a change in the number of bishops for the jurisdiction” with various budgetary and episcopal consequences. (Item 547, **Ex. D.**) By adopting that item, the General Conference adopted a portion of a broader plan proposed by the Jurisdictional Study Committee, including terms and procedures drawn directly from that committee’s proposal. (*See* Apr. 30 Proceedings at 27, **Ex. C**; Jurisdictional Study Committee’s Report to the Postponed General Conference 2020, attached as **Exhibit G.**)

The General Conference amended Item 547 before adopting it. A single, multi-part amendment added a requirement that GCFA “shall include the costs of such bishops when recommending a quadrennial budget.” (Apr. 30 Proceedings at 27, **Ex. C.**) It modified descriptions of bishops’ salary and expenses. (*Id.*) It added language requiring “[a]ny jurisdiction seeking any bishops over the base number provided in subparagraph a)”³ to demonstrate its capacity “to meet the full funding of the additional bishops for the coming quadrennium.” (Apr. 30 Proceedings at 27,

² The text of ¶ 404.2 from *The Book of Discipline, 2016* is attached as **Exhibit F.**

³ At that point in the proceedings, the relevant subparagraph a) of Item 547 read as follows: “Each jurisdiction shall be entitled to five bishops.” (Item 547, **Ex. D.**)

Ex. C; *see* Item 547, **Ex. D**.) And it added language directing GCFA to receive “a surety” from any jurisdiction seeking additional bishops and to “establish the base cost for the funding of an office of episcopal leader, which shall be used by any jurisdiction seeking to fund a number of bishops over the base number of five.” (Apr. 30 Proceedings at 27, **Ex. C**; *see* Item 547, **Ex. D**.)

Less than half an hour later, the General Conference passed a substituted form of Item 546 to “replace” ¶ 404.2 with a different set of “new provisions” directing that “the number of bishops shall be determined on the basis of missional reasons as approved by the General Conference on recommendation of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy.” (Apr. 30 Proceedings at 30, 33, **Ex. C**; Item 546, **Ex. E**.) The substitute text further directed the IJCOE to take certain steps in preparing its recommendation and directed GCFA and the Council of Bishops to consult with the IJCOE to inform the recommendation. (Apr. 30 Proceedings at 30, 33, **Ex. C**; Item 546, **Ex. E**.)

A group of delegates brought those new provisions to the General Conference by substituting them for the original text of Item 546. (Apr. 30 Proceedings at 30, **Ex. C**.) While the motion sought to “replace” ¶ 404.2’s text—which was, at that point, the new text adopted through Item 547—the delegate moving the substituted language of Item 546 explained that he wanted to avoid “changing the intent of what the body just passed” and expressed “trust” that the Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision would “make sure that [the General Assembly would not] negate the work of the Jurisdictional Study Committee” leading to the adoption of

Item 547. (*Id.* at 32.) Discussion of Item 546 reflected concern that the Jurisdictional Study Committee’s legislation would “not [be] effective until the next quadrennium.” (*Id.* at 30.) The General Conference voted to amend Item 546 by substitution and voted to adopt the substituted Item 546. (*Id.* at 33.)

Then, just before 6:30 p.m., the General Conference reopened consideration of Item 546 on a point of order and further amended it “to add ‘a minimum of five bishops for each jurisdiction.’” (Item 546, **Ex. E**; *see* Apr. 30 Proceedings at 37–38, **Ex. C**.) Item 547 already specified that “[e]ach jurisdiction shall be entitled to five bishops,” but the later-adopted language from Item 546 did not include a minimum before this final amendment. (Item 547, **Ex. D**; *see* Item 546, **Ex. E**.) Neither the movant nor the General Conference indicated where or how that minimum should be incorporated into ¶ 404.2 as altered first by Item 547 and then by Item 546. (Apr. 30 Proceedings at 37–38, **Ex. C**.) The General Conference adopted the amended version of Item 546. (*Id.* at 38.)

After the 2020/2024 General Conference, the Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision reconciled the General Conference’s actions by incorporating the language passed through Item 547, Item 546, and the later amendment reinforcing or reintroducing a minimum of five bishops for each jurisdiction into a hybrid ¶ 404.2. The text adopted through Item 547 appears in subparagraphs 404.2.d–e. (*Compare* ¶ 404.2.d–e; *with* Item 547, **Ex. D**.) The text adopted through Item 546 appears in subparagraphs 404.2.a–c. (*Compare* ¶ 404.2.a–c; *with* Item 546, **Ex. E**.) And the amendment regarding the “minimum of five bishops” for each jurisdiction

appears in an unnumbered paragraph before subparagraph 404.2.d.⁴ Responding to an earlier petition, the Judicial Council held that the amended form of ¶ 404.2 took “full effect immediately upon adjournment of the postponed 2020 General Conference.” ¶ 404.2.c n.1; *see* JCD 1502.

Following the General Conference’s amendments and edits by the Committee on Correlation and Editorial Revision, ¶ 404.2 now directs GCFA to:

- a) Provide input to the IJCOE to “analyze the capacity of the episcopal fund to determine the number of bishops that can be funded.” ¶ 404.2.c.
- b) Include the costs of certain bishops when recommending a quadrennial budget. ¶ 404.2.c (“The General Council on Finance and Administration shall include the costs of such bishops when recommending a quadrennial budget as provided by and required in ¶ 819.”).
- c) Calculate and apportion “the salary and other expenses” of “additional bishops that a jurisdiction may request.” ¶ 404.2.d (“A jurisdiction . . . may request additional bishops . . . ; provided, however, that the salary and other expenses of such bishops, as calculated by the General Council on Finance and Administration, shall be apportioned to the annual conferences of such jurisdiction.”).
- d) Receive a surety from any jurisdiction that seeks additional bishops. ¶ 404.2.d (“Any jurisdiction seeking any bishop(s) over the base number

⁴ For ease of citation only, and intending no argument as to the relationship of this provision to others, GCFA cites this provision as part of subparagraph 404.2.c.

provided in subparagraph 2.a-c) shall be able to demonstrate their ability to fund any additional bishops by providing a surety to the General Council on Finance and Administration that they are sufficiently capable to meet the full funding of additional bishop(s) for the coming quadrennium.”)

- e) Establish a base cost for the funding of an office of episcopal leader. ¶ 404.2.d (“The General Council on Finance and Administration will establish the base cost for the funding of an office of episcopal leader which shall be used by any jurisdiction seeking to fund a number of bishops over the base number of five.”)

GCFA is committed to neutrally and faithfully implementing the directives of ¶ 404.2 and respectfully seeks a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council to “resolve doubts” about the scope and nature of those directives so GCFA can “proceed in keeping with church law.” R. Prac. & Proc., App’x B.

Questions Presented

GCFA presents the following questions to the Judicial Council and requests a declaratory decision clarifying and harmonizing the meaning, application, and effect of the various provisions of ¶ 404.2 so GCFA and the other authorized bodies responsible for implementing ¶ 404.2 can accomplish the tasks set forth in ¶ 404.2 well before General Conference 2028. Specifically, GCFA respectfully requests a declaratory decision resolving the following questions:

1. Does the sentence in subparagraph 404.2.c which provides that GCFA “shall include the costs of **such bishops** when recommending a

quadrennial budget” mean that GCFA shall (1) include the costs associated with all of the episcopal areas ultimately recommended to the General Conference by the IJCOE after completing the entire process required by subparagraphs 404.2.a–c, regardless of how many episcopal areas are recommended for each jurisdiction, or (2) only include the costs associated with the “minimum of five bishops per jurisdiction” referenced in the sentence immediately preceding that sentence? ¶ 404.2.c (emphasis added).

2. Are any annual-conference-specific or jurisdiction-specific apportionments mandated by subparagraph 404.2.d if IJCOE recommends to the General Conference more than five bishops for each jurisdiction after completing the process required by subparagraphs 404.2.a–c?
3. What definition shall be given to the word “surety” as used in subparagraph 404.2.d? If a jurisdiction is not able to provide surety would that responsibility fall to the annual conferences within the jurisdiction? At what point must a surety be provided?
4. If the General Conference determines in its discretion to reject the recommendation of the IJCOE made in accordance with the provisions of ¶ 404.2, and any petition of a jurisdictional committee on episcopacy as to the number of episcopal areas to be approved for the next quadrennium and instead determines a different number of bishops for

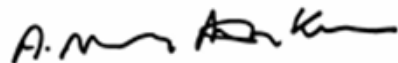
a given jurisdiction, are any annual-conference-specific apportionments as described in subparagraph 404.2.d required for the annual conferences within that jurisdiction?

5. Under subparagraph 404.2.e if a jurisdictional committee on episcopacy requests a change in the number of bishops for the jurisdiction, must the IJCOE recommend a timeline and a change in the number to satisfy that request from the jurisdictional committee to General Conference? If so, are additional apportionments required from that jurisdiction to cover the costs of the additional bishops?

Conclusion

GCFA petitions the Judicial Council for a declaratory decision resolving the questions presented here and respectfully requests that the Judicial Council issue its declaratory decision at its next session to give GCFA and other interested parties time to implement ¶ 404.2 faithfully as they take essential steps in the summer of 2026 to prepare for General Conference 2028.

Respectfully submitted,



Appadurai Moses Rathan Kumar
General Secretary and Treasurer

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit A: *The Book of Discipline, 2020/2024*, ¶ 404.2.
- Exhibit B: Excerpts from November 2025 GCFA Board Meeting Minutes.
- Exhibit C: Afternoon Proceedings for April 30, 2024, DCA (2024).
- Exhibit D: Legislative History of Calendar Item 547, DCA (2024).
- Exhibit E: Legislative History of Calendar Item 546, DCA (2024).
- Exhibit F: *The Book of Discipline, 2016*, ¶ 404.2.
- Exhibit G: Jurisdictional Study Committee's Report to the Postponed General Conference 2020, DCA, Vol. 3, (Sept. 6, 2023), p. 1268.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that this Petition has been served upon the following interested parties by electronic mail on this 22nd day of December, 2025:

Tracy S. Malone, President
Council of Bishops
bishop@inumc.org

Kim Ingram, Chairperson
Interjurisdictional Committee
on Episcopacy
kingram@wnccumc.org

Melissa Drake, Co-Chair
Committee on Correlation
and Editorial Revision
melissa.drake@iaumc.org

Diane Brown, Secretary
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Tom Salsgiver, Secretary
Northeastern Jurisdiction
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Eddie Erwin, Executive Director
South Central Jurisdiction
eerwin@scjumc.org

Kathy James, Secretary
Southeastern Jurisdiction
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Beth Rambikur, Secretary
Western Jurisdiction
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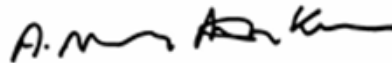
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Appadurai Moses Rathan Kumar
General Secretary and Treasurer

Exhibit A

THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE
OF
THE UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

2020/2024

The United Methodist Publishing House
Nashville, Tennessee

and unity within the Church—The United Methodist Church and the church universal.

f) The ministry of administration. The role of the bishop is to uphold the discipline and order of the Church by consecrating, ordaining, commissioning, supervising, and appointing persons in ministry to the Church and the world. As the presiding officer of the annual conference, the resident bishop provides order and leads in new opportunities for ministry within the annual conference. The bishop shares with other bishops the oversight of the whole church through the Council of Bishops and is held accountable through the Council of Bishops in collaboration with conference and jurisdictional committees on episcopacy.

2. District superintendents are elders in full connection appointed by the bishop to the cabinet as an extension of the superintending role of the bishop within the annual conference through the same disciplines and in accordance with their responsibilities designated in the *Book of Discipline* under the supervision of the resident bishop.

Section III. Election, Assignment, and Termination of Bishops

¶ 404. *Provisions for Episcopal Areas*

1. In central conferences, the number of bishops shall be determined on the basis of missional potential, as approved by the General Conference on recommendation of the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters. Before recommending changes in the number of episcopal areas, the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters shall:

a) consider these criteria in the following order of priority:

(1) the number of charge conferences and the number of active clergy in episcopal areas;

(2) the geographic size of episcopal areas, measured by the square miles/square km, and the numbers of time zones and nations;

(3) the structure of episcopal areas, measured by them number of annual conferences, and the overall church membership in all annual, provisional annual, missionary conferences, and missions in episcopal areas.

b) conduct a further analysis of the context and missional potential of changes in episcopal areas.

2. In the jurisdictions, the number of bishops shall be determined on the basis of missional reasons, as approved by the General

Conference on recommendation of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy. Before recommending the number of episcopal areas, the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy shall:

a) consider these criteria in the following order of priority: 1. The number of charge conferences and the number of active clergy in episcopal areas; 2. the geographic size of episcopal areas; 3. The overall church membership in the annual conferences in the episcopal areas.

b) conduct an analysis of the context and missional potential of changes in episcopal areas.

c) analyze the capacity of the episcopal fund to determine the number of bishops that can be funded. The following groups shall be consulted during this analysis of the episcopal fund: the executive committee of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, the officers of the Council of Bishops, and the officers of the General Council on Finance and Administration.¹

Each jurisdiction shall be entitled to a minimum of five bishops. The General Council on Finance and Administration shall include the costs of such bishops when recommending a quadrennial budget as provided by and required in ¶ 819.

d) A jurisdiction, through its jurisdictional committee on episcopacy may request additional bishops exceeding the numbers provided in sub-paragraph 2.*a-c)* above; provided, however, that the salary and other expenses of such bishops, as calculated by the General Council on Finance and Administration, shall be apportioned to the annual conferences of such jurisdiction. Any jurisdiction seeking any bishop(s) over the base number provided in subparagraph 2.*a-c)* shall be able to demonstrate their ability to fund any additional bishops by providing a surety to the General Council on Finance and Administration that they are sufficiently capable to meet the full funding of additional bishop(s) for the coming quadrennium. The General Council of Finance and Administration will establish the base cost for the funding of an office of episcopal leader which shall be used by any jurisdiction seeking to fund a number of bishops over the base number of five. It shall be the responsibility of the affected jurisdiction, through its Committee on Episcopacy, to request consideration of its missional need for additional bishops, and in the absence of such a request, there shall be no obligation on the part of the Interjurisdictional

1. See Judicial Council Decision 1502. This amendment takes full effect immediately upon adjournment of the postponed 2020 General Conference.

Committee on Episcopacy to consider such additional bishops nor to make any report or recommendation on such additional bishops to General Conference. In no case shall there be any constraint on General Conference's power to act in the absence of such a recommendation or to reject any recommendation that might be received. Further, the provisions of this paragraph shall not be construed to limit the authority of the jurisdictional conferences to determine the number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences and episcopal areas (¶ 41) or of the Colleges of Bishops to arrange the plan of episcopal supervision (¶ 49).

e) When a jurisdiction requests a change in the number of bishops for the jurisdiction, the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, in consultation with the jurisdictional committee on episcopacy for the affected jurisdiction, shall develop a timeline for implementation of the new number of bishops. The Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy shall recommend the timeline developed after such consultation to the General Conference for approval.

¶ 405. *Election and Consecration of Bishops*—1. *Nomination*—An annual conference, in the session immediately prior to the next regular session of the jurisdictional or central conference, may name one or more nominees for episcopal election. Balloting at jurisdictional and central conferences shall not be limited to nominees of annual conferences nor shall any jurisdictional or central conference delegate be bound to vote for any specific nominee. Each jurisdictional or central conference shall develop appropriate procedures for furnishing information about nominees from annual conferences. This shall be done at least two weeks prior to the first day of the jurisdictional or central conference. Similar procedures shall be developed for persons nominated by ballot who receive ten votes, or 5 percent of the valid votes cast, and the information shall be made available to the delegates at the site of the conference.

2. *Process*—a) Jurisdictional and central conference delegates, in electing bishops, shall give due consideration to the inclusiveness of The United Methodist Church with respect to sex, race, and national origin. In addition, consideration shall be given to the nature of superintendency as described in ¶ 401.

b) The jurisdictional and central conferences are authorized to fix the percentage of votes necessary to elect a bishop. It is recommended that at least 60 percent of those present and voting be necessary to elect.

Exhibit B

EXCERPTS FROM CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

General Council on Finance and Administration of The United Methodist Church, Inc.

Embassy Suites Nashville Airport
10 Century Boulevard; Nashville, TN 37214

November 14, 2025

CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

Roll Call

GCFA MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sheila Ahler
Danita Anderson
David Bell
*Thomas Bickerton***
*Bill Brownson***
Reggie Clemons
Kai-Uwe Dannenberg

Sharon Dean
Regan Reyes De Guzman
John Esquivel
Lisa Gafford
David Graves
Samuel Hong
*Stephen Love***

*Absent***

Robert Mallett
Francisco Neto
Kenneth Ow
Alex Shanks
LaToya Redd Thompson
William Williams, III

The board approved the inclusion of Moses Kumar, Jodi Chadwell, Elizabeth Redding, Caitlin Cogdon, Rick King, Leticia Mayberry Wright, Meg Villeneuve, Brandy Bivens, Dana Joki, and Sharon Asmus in the Closed Session.

Committee on General Agency & Episcopal Matters and Committee on Legal Responsibilities & Corporate Governance

Shelia Ahler and Robert Mallett presented the committees' joint report. The report recommended that the board authorize the filing of a Petition for Declaratory Decision with the Judicial Council addressing several related questions regarding ¶ 404.2, direct Leticia Mayberry Wright to prepare and file that Petition based on a set of core questions, and authorize Leticia Mayberry Wright to revise those questions as needed for clarity in the context of the Petition. The questions included:

- 1) Does the sentence in paragraph 404.2(c) which provides that GCFA "shall include the costs of SUCH BISHOPS when recommending a quadrennial budget" mean that GCFA shall (1) include the costs associated with all of the episcopal areas ultimately recommended to the General Conference by the IJCOE after completing the entire process required by subparagraphs a through c of paragraph 404.2, regardless of how

many episcopal areas are recommended for each jurisdiction, or (2) only be required to include the costs associated with five bishops per jurisdiction, as referenced in the sentence in paragraph 404.2(c) immediately preceding that sentence?

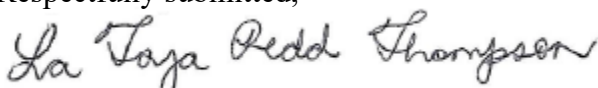
- 2) Are any annual-conference-specific or jurisdictional specific apportionments mandated by subparagraph d of 404.2 if the IJCOE recommends to the General Conference more than 5 bishops for each jurisdiction after completing the process required by subparagraphs a through c of paragraph 404.2?
- 3) What definition shall be given to the word “surety” as used in paragraph 404.2(d) of the Book of Discipline? If a jurisdiction is not able to provide surety would that responsibility fall to the annual conferences within the jurisdiction? At what point must a surety be provided?
- 4) If the General Conference determines in its discretion to reject the recommendation of the IJCOE made in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 404.2, and any petition of a jurisdictional COE as to the number of episcopal areas to be approved for the next quadrennium and instead determines a different number of bishops for a given jurisdiction, are any annual-conference-specific apportionments as described in subparagraph d of 404.2 required for the annual conferences within that jurisdiction?
- 5) Under 404.2e if a jurisdictional committee on episcopacy requests a change in the number of bishops for the jurisdiction, must the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy recommend a timeline and a change in the number to satisfy that request from the jurisdictional committee to General Conference? If so, are additional apportionments required from that jurisdiction to cover the costs of the additional bishops?

The board approved the recommendation.

[REMAINING BUSINESS OMITTED]

Closed session ended at 11:59 a.m. by consensus.

Respectfully submitted,



LaToya Redd Thompson
Recording Secretary

Exhibit C

Proceedings
Afternoon Proceedings for April 30

Plenary 1

BISHOP DAVID A. BARD: Good afternoon, beautiful people of God.

ALL: Good afternoon!

BISHOP BARD: *Buenos días.*

ALL: *Buenos días.*

BISHOP BARD: *Bom dia.*

ALL: *Bom dia.*

BISHOP BARD: *Bonjour.*

ALL: *Bonjour.*

BISHOP BARD: *Guten tag.*

ALL: *Guten tag.*

BISHOP BARD: *J'ai m'appelle* Bishop David Bard. I am the resident bishop of Michigan.

(cheering)

And in spite of those few words in languages other than English, I am fluent only in English, and so that is the language in which I will be presiding. I am male, born in the United States. My grandparents trace their ancestry to Finland, Sweden, and France. I can see older adult just around the corner. I am grateful this afternoon to have on my team Bishop Delores Williamston of the Louisiana Conference and Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson of the Virginia Conference. Grateful to have Maurice Henderson here as the parliamentarian.

And I want to take a quick moment before I pray to recognize another group of bishops. Often in past general conferences, the backup bishops have included retirees. As we prepared for this particular General Conference, we thought it would be helpful if active bishops served in that role so we all got familiar with the systems and could preside, if and when called upon. But many of our retired bishops served as legislative committee parliamentarians. They put in long hours last week, and I'd simply like us to acknowledge them and thank them for that work.

(applause)

Let us pray:

Water, River, Spirit, Grace, sweep over us. Seep into us. Recarve the paths your fingers traced in sculpting us. We gather together to do your work, O God, to seek your wisdom, to bask in your grace. We're here, in a way, to build highways for our God, infrastructure for the Spirit. We may do a little kingdom building while we are here. But most of all, we want to put structures in place that facilitate your work in the world and our local churches and our ministry settings, through our laypeople and our clergy. And some of our work, O God, may be to repair some of the potholes we've put in our way in the past. But guide us and help us along the way. We are here. We are yours. Come, Spirit, come. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

Jurisdictional Study Committee Report

BISHOP BARD: We're going to begin this afternoon with a report of the Jurisdictional Study Committee. The chair recognizes the following persons to provide this report: Fred Brewington, Susan Brumbaugh, and Lonnie Chafin. Please welcome them as they come.

FRED BREWINGTON (New York): Good afternoon, General Conference. My name is Fred Brewington. I'm from the New York Annual Conference. I'm an African American man. I'm straight. I'm laity. And I am an older—but try to catch me—member of the church. Susan?

SUSAN BRUMBAUGH (New Mexico): I'm Susan Brumbaugh from the New Mexico Annual Conference. And there's only one other of me, so if she cheers, I don't know if you'll hear it as much as your committee. And, here's Lonnie.

LONNIE CHAFIN (Northern Illinois): Good morning, General Conference. Lonnie Chafin. Laity. Northern Illinois Conference. White male.

BREWINGTON: Friends, together we will be presenting you with the Jurisdictional Study Report. Our full report can be found in volume three of your *ADCA* on pp. 1268–1274. In 2016, General Conference authorized a Jurisdictional Study Committee—or, we refer to it as the JSC—comprising members of each of the five jurisdictions within the United States to review legislation related to jurisdictional boundaries and the number of bishops within jurisdictions in order to make a recommendation to the 2020 General Conference. And, of course, that's us now constituted, meeting in 2024. The stark realities of the worldwide pandemic, disaffiliations, church closures, and changes in budget realities have impacted the landscape for all of us. That altered landscape, however, opens the view that is panoramic in the consideration of options that present themselves as the peoples called United Methodists enter a new and exciting paradigm.

We know that the mission of The United Methodist Church is to, say it with me, “Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world”. And with that in front of us as our mission, we took the “what” of The United Methodist Church’s mission and looked at the “how” do we get to the “what”. Our mission for the Jurisdictional Study Committee is: “The jurisdictional study committee will examine the current realities and missional needs of The United Methodist Church for the twenty-first century and recommend and process to determine the number of boundaries of the jurisdictions and episcopal areas that align with missional priorities and common purposes of The United Methodist Church so that we live out the call of Christ as people committed to be in the Connection.”

Hear these words: “I am about to do a new thing. Now it springs forth. Do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” As Isaiah writes those words and we hear them, knowing that we are not the same as we were in the past, the Jurisdictional Study Committee prayerfully extends the offerings that were provided to you and to the committees so that we could collectively find our way into God’s calling us to be who we are now and who we are to be in the future.

The work of the Jurisdictional Study Committee found its foundation in recognizing where we find ourselves going into this gather of the General Conference of 2020 reconstituted as 2024. Embracing the challenges before us, we know that fresh approaches must be considered for all aspects of our structure, systems, and sustainability. So, this includes being open to accept what resources avail themselves as we grow into our Spirit-led future.

Who was it that did this work? Well, if you take a look at the membership screen that is up before you, the Jurisdictional Study Committee represents the diversity of the five jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction was represented by one clergy person, one layperson, and one bishop from each jurisdiction, all of whom nominated by their College of Bishops. The JSC members reviewed legislation and the present *Book of Discipline* and held in-depth conversations and jurisdictional discussions with leaders from each jurisdiction, the GCFA, and bishops. We concluded that continuing with five jurisdictions and the current boundaries is appropriate.

We further concluded that membership formula that has been what we have been guided by in past, that was used to determine the number of bishops within The United States, is no longer an accurate reflection of the leadership and mission within the jurisdictions. We are recommending that jurisdictions are in a better position to assess missionally the number of bishops to better reflect the missional, cultural, and contextual needs of the church today. Susan?

BRUMBAUGH: The current process is a straightforward formula based on membership. We should have that on the screen. First, that every jurisdiction should be entitled to a minimum of five bishops, funded by an apportionment to all jurisdictional annual conferences, and that there will be an additional bishop for every 300 thousand members, also funded by an apportionment to all jurisdictional annual conferences. Let's face it, membership is changing rapidly and that formula is not serving us well. Our study committee is proposing that we end the use of membership to determine the number of funded bishops, and instead allow jurisdictions to consider the missional needs of their jurisdictions. Through conversations and discernment, we concluded that the number, assignment, focus, and support of United States bishops is best handled in the jurisdiction where people better understand the missional strengths and challenges and opportunities.

The petitions submitted by our Study Committee propose that each jurisdiction will have five bishops funded by apportionment to annual conferences in all five jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction would then discern whether there is need for additional bishops beyond these five. The salary and expenses of these additional bishops, other than travel, would be paid through apportionment to the annual conferences within the effected jurisdiction, rather than by apportionment to all annual conferences in the United States.

The financial burden of one jurisdiction's decision to have additional bishops beyond the minimum should not financially affect the annual conferences in other jurisdictions. This is similar to the process that's used to determine the number of bishops in the central conferences.

Over the last two years, as we lived into the reality of an ever-diminishing Episcopal Fund, our U.S. jurisdictions have already been having conversations about missional needs. So, before I briefly explain the process, we want Fred, our resident attorney, to talk about a concern we've heard about our recommended changes.

BREWINGTON: So here's the question: Is this constitutional? Yes, it is. Our work took us to understand that it was necessary to do some of the research ahead of time. And, the constitution of The United Methodist Church establishes an interconnected set of authorities leading to the determination of the number of bishops authorized for election and assignment in the jurisdictional conferences. The Judicial Council has observed, that quote, "The system balances and constrains the powers exercised by each of the authorities individually and, by all, connectionally."

Colleges of bishops have authority to arrange the plan of Episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within their respective territories. So, jurisdictional conferences have authority to determine the number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences and episcopal areas. You find that in paragraph 40.

Colleges of bishops have authority to arrange the plan of Episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary Conferences, and missions within their respective territories. That's paragraph 48.

General Conference has authority to fix a uniform basis upon which bishop shall be elected by the jurisdictional conferences. You'll find that at paragraph 16.10. And to determine and provide for raising and distributing funds necessary to carry the work of the church. The Judicial Council has reason that the dual authority granted to General Conference determines how many bishops there will be in each jurisdiction. And that is found in decision 1312.

Our legislative proposals, all of which have been dealt with now by the committees, attempted to take into account the tension created by these competing constitutional provisions in an effort to create a new process which allows the determination of the number of bishops in the jurisdictions to be based on missional needs rather than the strict mathematical formula that Susan spoke about. And in doing so, we are shifting the financial responsibility for support for bishops beyond the minimal number directly to the jurisdictions. Susan?

BRUMBAUGH: Seeing that we do not have a lot of time left, I want to talk about a couple of things. One is that there are five petitions that are part of the Jurisdictional Study Committee's report, and three of them have already passed on the consent calendar. We have two that we are about to discuss that have financial implications. One on office expenses and one on the number of bishops. A concern I've heard is that our petition named that the number of bishops would be set on the current 2016 number which, of course, is out of date. Our intention was to say, that the number should be set by the Interjurisdictional Study Committee's recommendations, and they have all been working on that. And that this process would then be implemented over the next four years and be used really in the next General Conference.

So I hope that helps a little bit. I want Lonnie to talk a little bit, 'cause we have a little bit more time, about some of the financial implications.

CHAFIN: So, how will the funding work? It is important to realize how little will change. GCFA will still apportion a single amount for the Episcopal Fund to all annual conferences. There won't be an apportionment for bishops from the jurisdiction and from GCFA; there will be one. We are not proposing that there be, GCFA would continue the staffing relationship bishops that they have currently. There would be no change in that. There wouldn't be jurisdictions paying for hiring some bishops and GCFA hiring other bishops. There would be no changes for central conference bishops, nor the Council of Bishops, nor the College of Bishops, nor the Ecumenical office, nor retired bishops.

There are only two key changes, the first change is around office expenses. Currently, the Episcopal fund asks for money, in the apportionment for the Episcopal fund, GCFA asks for money to support office expenses for jurisdictional bishops. And then that money is paid back to the annual conferences in office support. This petition would end that back-and-forth. And that the costs would shift from the Episcopal Fund and just remain with the annual conference.

And the second piece is that if the Jurisdiction decides for a sixth or seventh bishop beyond the minimum, the cost of that bishop would be borne by the conferences within that jurisdiction, wrapped into the calculation of their Episcopal Fund apportionment, and not spread across all annual conferences. So for example, if you think that cost of a jurisdictional bishop is \$300,000, and the North Central Jurisdiction decides to have a sixth bishop, that \$300,000 would be apportioned only to the ten conferences in the North Central Jurisdiction.

BREWINGTON: So Susan, what would you like the folks out there to do?

BRUMBAUGH: I would like us to move on to the next calendar item, that is what I would like us to do. We wanted to share some information to help you as you discern these next two items, and I hope that that was helpful. Thank you for your time.

BREWINGTON: Take a look at the petitions. Thank you so much.

Calendar Items

BISHOP BARD: So friends, we are going to next consider Calendar Item 541. It is found in the *ADCA* on p. 1448—I'm sorry. In the *DCA* on p. 2206. Calendar Item 541, Petition No. 20944. In the *ADCA* pp. 1448–1450 and as that calendar item is bring presented, I'd like to alert the presenters for Calendar Item 542 to come the podium, we are going to take that calendar item next.

So the calendar item we are now considering is Calendar Item No. 541. Scott Brewer is the presenter.

SCOTT BREWER (Great Plains): Thank you Bishop. I bring you greetings—excuse me. My name is Scott Brewer. I am a White male, lay person, from the Great Plains Annual Conference. Thanks. And I am 46 years old, and those are city miles.

Bishop, I bring greeting on behalf of the Financial Administration Legislative Committee, where the opinions are strong, the spreadsheets are good-looking, and the delegates are always above average.

We present Calendar Item No. 541. This relates specifically to bishops' office expenses. The committee voted 41 to 19 against adoption, or recommendation for adoption, of this petition. For each Episcopal Area, it cost approximately \$70,000 per year to pay for those office expenses. It was the opinion of the committee, which admittedly did not benefit from the report that you just received, that the cost that would be incurred by our annual conference because they have not been adequately budgeting for would pose a hardship for annual conferences in the jurisdictions, and that, secondly, they would disproportionately affect those annual conferences with larger geographic areas than those that enjoy much smaller ones. And so, for those reasons, Bishop, we recommended rejection of this petition.

BISHOP BARD: The committee would recommend that you vote no on this calendar item. It comes before us because it was taken of that list by the delegates listed there. The item, however, is before you in the positive, by Robert's Rules, the item is before you. If you want to vote for the item, you would vote yes. If you want to for against the item, which would be to vote the way the committee recommends, you would vote no when we get to that point.

The floor is now open for debate. If you wish to speak for or against Calendar Item 541, please register in the pool.

Seeing no one who wishes to speak on this calendar item, we will move to vote. Please find your voting devices. Just a reminder, this calendar item, the committee voted no on this item. But you can vote your conscience. If you wish to support Calendar Item 541, you will vote yes. If you wish not to support Calendar Item 541, you will vote no. Please vote now.

(pause)

Thank you. Tech folks, I see some checkered flags; not many. There's some right down here, front center, right in front of me; couple rows back. Thank you. Really appreciative of all the folks who are making our technology work. And one back to my right, way back in the corner over here. This is a wonderful combination of high technology and low tech.

Did the NASCAR Museum donate the checkered flags, does anybody know? Oh, we purchased them before 2019, but we will save them and reuse them. So treat your checkered flags with kindness.

Looks like we are ready to close the vote. The voting is now closed. Let's see the results.

With 254 in the affirmative, 437 opposed. The motion, Calendar Item 541 does not pass.

[Yes, 254; No, 437]

We're going to move to Calendar Item 542. The presenter is Drew Dyson. There is with this item a minority report. For those of you who love parliamentary procedure, it will be our first minority report of this General Conference.

Please, Drew. Thank you.

DREW DYSON (Greater New Jersey): Good afternoon, Bishop. My name is Drew Dyson. Clergy. Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. White adult male.

On behalf of the Financial Administration Legislation Committee, I'm here to move Calendar Item 542, GFCA Report No. 8, Petition No. 21124. The report can be found on *DCA* p. 1893. And as amended, the committee voted to approve, by a vote of 42 for, 21 against. The amendment would be in section 1b to amend the base percentage to 2.9 percent for 2025, 2026, 2027, and 2028.

I grew up as the youngest of four boys being raised by a single mother with limited financial resources. There were days when our only meal came from the leftovers from the kitchen of the United Methodist Nursing Home where my mom worked as social worker and administrator. Yet, my mom supported the church with her tithe and second mile giving, teaching us that even in the midst of financial challenges, we give to God's work in the world in response to God's goodness and love.

As the Financial Administrative Committee considered Report 8 proposed by GCFA, we wanted to begin by considering the impact of the proposed 22-percent cut to the base rate and the corresponding proposed budget that had on our ministries as a denomination. We applauded the work of our General Agencies over the last four years to adjust to the financial realities stemming from the COVID pandemic, church disaffiliations, and so much more. They down-sized their agencies, cut staff, and

addressed overlap and redundancy. They've done hard and difficult work. With the proposed base rate from GCFA of 2.595 percent for the coming quadrennial, we wanted to hear what the second-level impact was of these cuts. What is the impact that these cuts would have, not only on the agencies, but on the ministries of our denomination? So as a committee, here is some of what we heard:

There will be 184 fewer student scholarships available for Africa University. There will be a significant reduction in the number of missionaries trained and deployed throughout the world. Our reduction in the activities of our global health boards in Africa, along with cuts in the Yambasu Agricultural Initiative. There will be reduced support for Methodist schools, colleges, and universities, especially our HBCUs. Reduction in campus ministries supporting the spiritual development of young people. Impact on the ability to provide multilingual communications and multilingual resources across our increasingly diverse denomination. Fewer internships and fellowships for young people exploring their call to ministry and their work of justice and peace in and beyond the church.

At the same time, we have great concern for the ministry of the local church and the good work done in and through our local churches and annual conferences. The legislative committee's recommended base rate of 2.9 percent seeks to find a balance between our commitment to supporting local ministry and the need to continue our commitment to God's work in the world through our global church.

As you review the formula, it's important to know that the net expenditures being projected by GCFA are 26-plus percent lower than the previous quadrennium. That net expenditure decrease attends to the financial realities of disaffiliation and pandemic impact.

The committee recommended base rate of 2.9 percent represents a 12-percent cut from the current base rate of 3.29 percent in the current quadrennium. It is not an increase over our current apportionment formula, despite the information that's been circulated. Yes, it's not as extreme as the 21-percent cut from the current base rate that is being recommended. But, we believe that it is a reasonable adjustment that balances our values of putting more money into the local church and continuing to support the powerful ministry enabled by our denomination.

To put it into context, a local church with an expense budget of \$250 thousand a year would receive an approximate \$1,000 cut in their General Church Apportionment, rather than a \$1,750 cut under the 2.595 percent initially proposed by GCFA. By setting the base rate at 2.9 percent, we would also be restoring \$40.6 million to the proposed quadrennial budget of \$352 million; also still a significant cut.

The message that we want to send to the local church and to the world following the 2024 General Conference of The United Methodist Church is about who we are now and into the future. What do we want to communicate about our values and our commitments as a church? On the other side of disaffiliation, who do we want to be? So the committee endorsed a base rate of 2.9 percent that we believe says we want to continue our investments in our HBCUs creating educational opportunities for Black students at a time when the Supreme Court has outlawed Affirmative Action. We want to strengthen our support for Africa University and continue our commitment to being truly global as a denomination. To strengthen our witness on campuses, supporting college students at a time when their yearning for justice is being threatened. To invest in global health, ecological justice, and multilingual programming and resources to support our growing diversity. We want to support episcopal leadership needed to guide our denomination into the future that God is leading us.

The Financial Administration Legislative Committee recommends your support for the majority report setting our apportionment base percentage at 2.9 percent.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you, Drew. As noted there is a minority report, and I call on Don House to present that.

DON HOUSE (Texas): Good afternoon. My name is Don House. I'm from Texas. Lay, White, and I'm an adult. Our issue between the majority and the minority report is the base percentage. The minority report is a percentage of 2.59 percent. The majority report, as you've heard, is a 2.9 percent. The overview is that we're talking about the apportionments that are collected by the General Conference through GCFA from the jurisdictional annual conferences that then forward those requests onto the local Churches. The formula in Report No. 8 is the amount of apportionment is equal to net expenditures times the base percent. And that expenditure have deductions for the payment of apportionments and the payments for other benevolences among the local churches.

I'm an economist, so I have a particular way of thinking, and bear with me. This is how, from an economist standpoint, how our connection works. The local church is the engine, and it makes disciples, and it provides for connectional funding. The fuel is the collection plate and God's guidance. The local church makes investments in making its disciples in creating the funds for the connection. Those investments are in staff, programs, and facilities. Our overall goal is to have sufficient health among the churches that then would provide the adequate funding for the agencies. We use an indicator, kind of an engine indicator, to see how health the churches are. And that is, how do they respond to these general church apportionments? The sign of a healthy church among the jurisdictional conferences is a pretty high collection rate on those apportionments, 90 percent or above. And that generates healthy churches and that generates sufficient funding. How well are we doing? The collection rate in 2016 was 91.8 percent. Healthy. In 2022 it was 73.7 percent. And estimating in 2024, 68.5 percent. That is not a healthy engine.

GCFA responses have historically have been these: Give the local churches relief. In 2016—I'm sorry—in 2024. I mean 2004, the base percentage was 4.137 percent, meaning that the general church was asking for 4.137 percent of the net expenditures from the collection plate. In 2025 to 2028, GCFA estimated that it should be reduced and it had been reducing all the way through that period. To 2.595, percent and that is what is contained in the minority report. Now when we look out from 2025 to 2028, GCFA is looking at the health of the local churches as well as the funding for the agencies. What we have before us is the latest collection rate estimated at 68.5 percent, not over 90 percent. We also have not taken into account accurately—because we haven't done the work yet—the impact of disaffiliation. That is still an unknown. GCFA has spent countless hours doing the projections of net expenditures into the future and been in the presence of disaffiliation, the full effects of which are not yet fully known, and the health of the local church. What percent of the collection plate and net spending should be asked for, for funding the general agencies?

So the recommendation was 2.595 percent. The expectation is healthier churches and an improvement in the collection rate, which helps the overall connectional system. If we go to the 2.9 percent, which is above what is contained in the minority report, based on the research that I've done, we will have even a lower payout rate below the 68.5 percent and fewer investments from the local church into staff, programs, and facilities. We want a healthier body of local churches with which we can fund the agencies. The evidence indicates that they have suffered. GCFA is recommending, and the minority report is recommending, some relief. Please select the minority report. Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. Don, I have a question before you leave the stage. In your report you kept referring to the 2.59 percent according to the printed text the recommendation is 2.6 percent

HOUSE: That's a rounding error. It's 2.595. It goes out about 6 decimals.

BISHOP BARD: So it goes up. So it's really not a change—you're using the 2.5... the really long—

HOUSE: I'm giving you some more decimals.

BISHOP: Thank you. I think.

(laughter)

So friends, by our rules 28 and 29, minority reports are treated as substitute motions.

I'm seeing a checkered flag so those of you working tech want to attend the checkered flags I would appreciate it. Yeah, and the pool is not yet open and I'd ask if we could clear all the names out of the current pool.

Simply want to explain the process by which we handle minority reports. We treat them as substitute motions and use our rules for managing substitute motions. Which means when there is a substitute, the question before the body is, are you wanting to substitute the minority report for the motion made by the committee? That is the only question before us. The only question for discussion and debate. Which motion do want to work with, and after you make that decision, then we will debate which motion you have made the main motion.

Is it clear enough to move forward? So the question before the body is, "Do you want to start with the committee report, which is a base rate of 2.9 percent?" or "Do you want to work on the minority report, which is the base rate of 2.59-da-da-da—let's just talk about it as 2.6 for our conversation. We're opening the pool for you to speak for or against substituting the minority report for the committee report. The pool is open.

I'd like to recognize Jon Copeland. Mic. 2. A speech for.

JON COPELAND (Missouri): *Bom dia*. My name is Jon Copeland, a member of the Missouri Annual Conference. I'm a lay delegate, adult, male. I am biracial, Chinese. I rise to speak in favor of the minority report.

My home church, LaFayette Park UMC, is small but it's mighty. It is a refuge for God's children, especially those on the margins. Three out of four local churches in my annual conference are small churches, just like mine. The reduction in the base percentage rate is welcome relief. Every day, small churches like mine must make difficult decisions on how to use a limited amount of money. Do we fix the boiler? Do we fix the truck for our furniture ministry? There is no shortage of things to fix at my small local church. And so I was disappointed to hear that this amendment cuts that relief nearly in half.

By my estimates, this amendment would reduce our relief by about \$1,000. Let me tell you something, \$1,000 goes a long way in a small church. With \$1,000, we could buy gas for a year for our furniture ministry. We could replace windows and reduce our carbon footprint. We could increase our support for the Mozambique Initiative.

(applause)

Yeah, clap with that. Or we could simply add to our reserve funds. This amendment takes half of that relief and sends it to, well, where does it send it? The amendment does not say. I want to know because I've got a long list of things it could go to if those funds stayed at my local church and in my annual conference.

BISHOP BARD: Eight seconds.

COPELAND: Therefore, I am not satisfied with this amendment and urge you to support the minority report.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. There's someone in here who has asked to amend this motion. It's not amenable to amendments. I'm going to call on Emily Allen, mic. 5, a speech against.

EMILY ALLEN (California-Nevada): Thank you, Bishop. Emily Allen, California-Nevada, layperson, laywoman. I'm speaking against the minority report. I recognize that with the delay in General Conference, numbers that GCFA published in 2019 as the anticipated budget for the 2020 quadrennium—as decreases in the expected ask, the expected base rate, some churches, some annual conferences started living into those numbers immediately, rather than continuing to give apportionments at the officially-approved 2016 rates. I do not believe that the percentage received that was reported by the minority report speaker is indicative of the health of our local churches and their willingness and enthusiasm to support the work of the General Church. I believe that this story Bishop Bickerton shared of the Texas Annual Conference and the enthusiasm for the work of this denomination and for remaining in this denomination is more indicative of the way our church will be going forward. And our ability to live into that future with a mindset of open generosity and funding the work of our entire connection and not a mindset of scarcity in thinking that we must keep all of our own resources to ourselves.

Therefore, I am speaking against the minority report and urge you to vote it down. Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. I'd like to call on Tolbert Nyenswah. Mic. 1, a speech for substitution. Not seeing anybody move toward—oh, here we go. Thank you. Mic. 1, please.

TOLBERT NYENSWAH (Liberia): Thank you, Bishop. My name is Tolbert Nyenswah from the West African Central Conference, conference lay leader. I'm in support of the committee's report and the committee's petition. The reason is that, having served as co-chair on several committees, I see a very rigorous, the work of the committees, so their recommendation should be pivotal. Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. I'd like to invite Denise Smart, mic. 3, for a speech against substitution.

DENISE SMARTT (New York): Bishop, I'm Denise Smartt-Sears, African American, woman, clergy, New York Conference, U.S.A. I speak against the minority report. I learned to tithe from my parents, and I don't know where I would be were it not for The United Methodist Church. I graduated from Dillard University, one the eleven Black colleges related to The United Methodist Church—because I'm a Northerner, and so we knew very little about the schools in the South that our church was offering. But it was a family in my father's first church, that they kind of took me in and they told us about this school where she and her daughters had attended. And so God be the glory, I went to that Christian school. I was nurtured and educated to be the woman that I am today. And so, even when I served our church as a Lina H. McCord Ambassador, I had the opportunity to travel throughout our connection and Puerto Rico at the time and tell them the importance of the Black College Fund. Today, I stand as a proud parent of a son who attends Clark Atlanta University. Why did he choose that school? Because that's where his aunt and uncle went. And he saw what it did for them and prays that it will help transform him into a young man, Christian young man, who gives back to his community.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. I'd like to call on Amy King, mic. 5, speech for substitution. And then I'm going to call on Jen Peters, Michigan, mic. 5, for a speech against. At that point we will have had three speeches for and three against and by our rules we will move to a vote.

AMY KING (North Georgia): Hi, Bishop. Can I use mic. 6, instead?

BISHOP BARD: You certainly may.

KING: Thank you. Amy King. North Georgia. Laity. White. Female. I do not belong on any committees. I'm not speaking on behalf of anyone's interest other than the local church.

Every Sunday it's a kind of a guess if we're going to have a working HVAC, but since 2016 the general church's net assets have increased from \$136 million to \$509 million. That's their unrestricted net assets. So that means, the assets less the money they owe someone has increased by 227 percent while we decide if we're going to have heat or air every week.

Increasing the base rate will increase the cost for the local church. We have to understand that the mission and the ministry of The United Methodist Church happens at the local level. Increasing our apportionments takes away pay from pastors. We already have pastors who aren't paid enough, our BIPOC pastors—Black, Indigenous, and people of color—are grossly underpaid in the Methodist church, and increasingly apportionments to the General Church takes money out of churches to pay their clergy, to pay their staff, to do ministry. So, I suggest, and it is my hope, that we will accept the substitution and go with the minority report. Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. Jen Peters, Michigan. Mic. 5.

JEN PETERS (Michigan): Bishop, I'm also going to use mic. 6, if that's okay.

BISHOP BARD: Yes.

PETERS: Thank you. Jen Peters, laity from Michigan. White, adult, female. I would like to speak against the minority report. I appreciate the work of GCFA. The American church is a shrinking church, but as we have heard from many of our siblings, the worldwide church is growing. Praise be to God and to the good work of The United Methodist Church. The reality is, that in the wake of denominational decline, disaffiliation, and COVID, we have seen reduced budgets, and we need to continue to shrink our budget. In Michigan, we have already made drastic and painful cuts to our conference budget and staff. And we continue to adjust to the reality of the economics of this world.

But we do not need to cut so far, so fast. The committee's proposed base percentage of 2.9 that came out of committee is still a cut from our current base rate of 3.29, but is not the deep cut that GCFA originally proposed. It is a compromise. It will cushion the fall that we all anticipate.

Most annual conferences have already drafted their budgets based on a lower number. While they have a draft, no conferences have passed a budget, yet. If you support the rate of 2.9, they will have to go back and rework those budgets. I know I am asking them to do hard work. I have talked with some leadership in my own Michigan Annual Conference and it would increase ask to the churches. I know that is a difficult ask. I'm asking all of us, right now, to sell the importance of the connection and the importance of these apportioned dollars. It would add an approximate—

BISHOP BARD: Seven seconds.

PETERS: —\$40.6 million to our connectional ministry. We need to create a culture of commitment to the connection.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. In accordance with Rule 7.3, after three speeches for and three speeches against, with no secondary motions pending, we move directly to a vote. Before we vote, the presenter of the minority report gets a brief summary statement, followed by a presenter of the majority report.

HOUSE: The connection is extremely important, and our conference is an example. We have develop the notion of a covenant—between the local church and the annual conference—a covenant to pay 100 percent of our apportionments. We have churches that are pushing through their reserves to continue that covenant. When we have relatively high payout rates in the annual conference, that covenant gets stronger and growing across the churches. With a payout rate of 68.5 percent, it's difficult to continue that covenant. And when churches break loose and start paying less than asked, it can become the standard. I think it's in our best interest to improve the payout rate from 68.5 percent by asking for less.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. Drew?

DYSON: I'm grateful for my mother's words and for her teaching. I'm grateful for the gift of helping me understand that we give in response to God's grace, not in response to our situation. And so I urge, on behalf of the Financial Administration Legislative Committee, that this 2.9 percent base rate is a balance between a proposed cut of 2.6 and the current rate of 3.29, still reflecting a cut in the overall base rate and in our overall budget. As a committee, we believed that this cut is fair and balanced and continues to balance the important work that happens in our local churches and the work that happens through our global connection. We urge that you vote against the minority report. Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. We will soon proceed to a vote. The motion requires a majority vote. The question is on the adoption of the motion to substitute the minority report for the original committee report as printed. The question is this: Shall the minority be substituted for the original financial administration committee report? Please vote now.

(pause)

Has everyone who wishes to vote had an opportunity to vote? I'm seeing no checkered flags. Oh, there's a checkered flag over here. Wait just a few more seconds here. Appears everyone has had an opportunity to vote. The voting is closed. See the results.

With 455 votes in the affirmative, 266 in the negative, you have approved the motion to substitute. The minority report is now before us as the main motion.

[Yes, 455; No, 266]

We're still on Calendar Item 542, but the minority report. That is before us for further discussion or other action as the body may wish. If you'd like to speak for or against or engage in any other kind of conversation, the pool is open.

(pause)

I'd like to call on Scott Brewer as an other parliamentary enquiry, or action.

BREWER: Bishop, I move to refer Calendar Item 542 to GCFA for its further review and recommendations. GCFA shall report its recommendations by Friday, May 3rd, 2025. Furthermore, the council is directed in its recommendations to reflect both the actions taken so far on Report No. 8, as well as all other petitions with financial implications that have or may still be approved by this General Conference. And if there's a second, I'll be happy to....

BISHOP BARD: Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Seconded!

BREWER: Bishop, the purpose of this referral is two-fold. First, to ensure that the will of the body is reflected in the final budget that we adopt on Friday—or at least that I hope we adopt on Friday. Secondly, the budget is a very complicated work. We need to provide those that are charged with bringing a fully scrutinized and perfected budget sufficient time and authority to do so. I believe that this referral does both. Whether you agreed with the majority or minority report, I think we have had an important and helpful debate. Nevertheless, the highly technical nature of the business that is still before us is best left with those who need to work out the details and make sure that the numbers balance. I don't think that this body at this time is in a position to do that.

BISHOP BARD: The motion before us is to refer Calendar Item 542 back to the General Council on Finance and Administration for a report back to the body on Friday. Please clear the speak pool. If anyone would like to speak for or against the motion to refer, please enter the pool now.

(pause)

So I'm going to call on Sarah Schlieckert, Baltimore-Washington, mic. 6. Point of enquiry

SARAH SCHLIECKERT (Baltimore-Washington): Thank you. Sarah Schlieckert, clergy, Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference. Female, White, adult. Do our rules, which were stated earlier that we need to deal items with financial implications, allow for us to refer this piece?

(pause)

BISHOP BARD: Obviously, we're conferring up here. Thank you for your patience.

(pause)

So, here's the discussion. GCFA needs some kind of starting point by which to consider all of the other financial legislation that may get passed by this body. This bit of legislation provides the starting point for them to do their work, and without us leaving Calendar Item 542 with some decision about the base rate, it's unlikely that they will be able to process the other bits of legislation that have financial implications. That's what I'm hearing.

Is Moses Kumar in the house?

(pause)

Or—Yeah, thanks. Mike McKee. Bishop McKee, would you address this as president of GCFA.

BISHOP MICHAEL MCKEE: Remind me what you asked, Bishop Bard. I want to be clear.

BISHOP BARD: Both of us are at the same place on this.

BISHOP MCKEE: I don't think we are, that's why I want to be very clear.

BISHOP BARD: I think we both want to be clear. So, what I'm hearing is that we need to pass something related to Calendar Item 542, a base rate, with which GCFA can work. So referring this would not be in order.

BISHOP MCKEE: One of the things that I think I heard, the person who spoke last about something, it was about it would report in 2025, not this Friday. Different people are hearing different things from that. So, I think we should ask the maker of the motion—

BISHOP BARD: Yes. Would like to ask Scott Brewer to come back to mic. 4, and we'll call on Moses Kumar—

MOSES KUMAR (General Secretary and Treasurer of the General Council on Finance and Administration): I am here, Bishop.

BISHOP BARD: Yes, thank you. Thank you, General Secretary Kumar. Mic. 4, Scott Brewer.

BREWER: Bishop, I apologize for my mid-western drawl. I did intend for it to be 2024; that is this Friday. And if I may just make one other point, I believe that if we were to take action now, we would have to also then take action to reconsider our action now in order to bring Report No. 8 back on Friday.

BISHOP BARD: So, is the motion to refer?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (*indecipherable*)

BISHOP BARD: I know you don't make motions, but I'll call on General Secretary, mic. 5.

KUMAR: Bishop, good afternoon. I believe the referral is in order, and we will consider this minority report that's just been approved. We will take it as the base for our calculations of other reports, Bishop.

BISHOP BARD: So, the motion to refer would be in order?

KUMAR: Yes, Bishop.

BISHOP BARD: OK. Yes, yes, I know it has to be approved. We have not yet voted on it. I just wanted to make sure we want to take the time to consider it and vote on it, and not do all that work and then find out it's not in order. Thank you, General Secretary Kumar.

So, the motion before us is to refer Calendar Item 542 back to GCFA for a report back to this body on this Friday of this year.

(laughter)

You know we've had a lot of kind of weird time things happening in the last four years. So, I like to call on Bonnie Marden, mic. 1, for a point of order.

BONNIE MARDEN (New England): Bonnie Marden, layperson from the New England Annual Conference, and by DNA, maternally connected to the West African diaspora.

I have a point of order, and I may be wrong, but I'm looking at Rule No. 28 in the first ADCA, Line nos. 951–953. We just—the substitute motion is not supposed to negate the main motion. But it actually was a return to the original petition. I just wanted the body to be aware; to check in with you that was an OK substitution.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. So, Rule 29 takes precedence as a minority report. We process the minority report as a substitute motion, but I do believe it was in order. So, we began with Rule 29, which then refers us back to Rule 28 for the process.

MARDEN: I think the process was accurate, I'm just questioning whether returning to the original petition is not actually...

BISHOP BARD: I believe that is an appropriate—If it was offered as a substitute motion from the floor, I don't believe that it would have been in order. But, being a minority report from the committee, I do believe that it was in order. Thank you for your question.

So, the motion before us, the question before us, is referral. Whether you want to refer Calendar Item 542 back to GCFA. I'd like to call on Dave Nuckols, mic. 1, for a speech against. Then, I will call on Linda King, mic. 5, for a speech for.

Mic. 1, please. Mic. 1.

DAVE NUCKOLS (Minnesota): Thank you, Bishop. I am Dave Nuckols. Lay adult from the Minnesota Conference. I would like to speak against the referral, and I have two reasons I'd like to offer.

One, I was already in the queue right after we voted to make the minority report the main motion. I was in the queue to amend, and I know that referral takes precedence, so you in no way errored, Bishop. But, my point is: I have an amendment that if I have a chance to introduce it in due course, I think could make the base rate plan considerably more amenable to the body at large. So I would love to have a chance to do that.

The second reason, Bishop, is when the main motion became—when the minority report was voted as the main motion, it's properly debatable in requiring two speeches for or against, and the motion to referral negated our rules about speeches for or against.

BISHOP BARD: No, a motion to refer is not a closing of debate. It is appropriate anytime in that. So, we're not out of our rules in that. You're right, referral does not to consider that, but it is not out of order.

NUCKOLS: Well, I am not going to argue about parliamentary procedure with an expert, so I will take that back. But for the body, as we consider whether to refer or not, we have not had speeches about the minority report as a main motion—

BISHOP BARD: You're correct.

NUCKOLS: —And I have, what I think is a constructive amendment that I would love to do when it becomes in order.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. Mic. 5.

LINDA KING (Kentucky): Bishop, I tried to opt out of the queue after listening to people speak; I am going to have to rethink. Can you opt me out?

BISHOP BARD: Sure!

KING: Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Let's see, we've had one speech against referral, speaker for referral. I'd like to call on—we're trying to get some folks who maybe haven't had a chance to speak. We're finding that a lot of you are shy, so I'd like to call on Kalaba Chali, mic. 4, a speech for referral. And then next I'll call on Matthew Laferty for a speech against referral.

KALABA CHALI (Great Plains): Bishop, mic. 4. Can I use this one?

BISHOP BARD: Mic. 4, my apologies. Please proceed.

CHALI: Kalaba Chali. I'm a male, Black, Zambian-Congolese American. From the Great Plains Conference. And I am a clergy.

I support the referral. I also believe that the conversation we had that led to supporting the minority support is very important. I believe that wisdom will guide the committee in their work—the board and their work. I am in my first year as a district superintendent. It has been so painful to see the struggle of local churches that have lost a lot of members and the shrinking financial resources. I have also been inspired especially for some of our Black churches in Wichita, Kansas. Pastors exploring creative ideas to raise fund. I believe all of us can learn to do that. The local church is the basis of all we do as with regard to our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ. I have had the painful experience of leading—just this Sunday, before I came here on Monday, I led a special charge conference to cut a salary of a pastor by \$12,000. I wish that was a unique case, but I've done this six times already before I finish my first year as a district superintendent. So the referral is in order, and I plead with you, we do not need to crush our local churches. Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. Matthew Laferty. Mic. 5.

MATTHEW LAFERTY (East Ohio): Bishop?

BISHOP BARD: Yes?

LAFERTY: I think the Holy Spirit got ahold of my device. I didn't mean to get in the queue.

(laughter)

BISHOP BARD: Oh, and we need a copy of the written motion from Scott Brewer, please. So I'm going to go to Lydia Muñoz, mic. 5, who is in the pool for an amendment. The motion to refer is amendable, but pretty limited on how you can amend it. So I want to check and see if that's what you want to do, try to amend the motion to refer. Mic. 5.

LYDIA MUÑOZ (Eastern Pennsylvania): Lydia Muñoz, Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, Latina, clergy, woman. I'm not sure if—I'm not sure of that rule. And that I would like for it to be amended so that the referral has with it some negotiation between the 2.9 and the 2.6. If GCFA would consider that. Is that in order?

BISHOP BARD: I think you've made a statement. They've been here and have heard the debate. So I think, I think that's getting—we, in referring this, we've asked them to take into account the conversation. So I think they've heard that. So I would think that that particular amendment is not appropriate. I'm going turn to some points of information. We've, to date, to this moment, had two speeches for referral, one against. Ken Ow, Baltimore-Washington.

Thank you, point of inquiry.

KEN OW (Baltimore-Washington): Thank you. Ken Ow, Baltimore-Washington, laity.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you, Ken.

OW: I am Chinese, golden senior. And as being one of the original signers of the minority report, I do want to point out that the Report No. 8 from GCFA is 2.5954212777.... And the minority report had to be a different number. So the number on the minority report is 2.6. It is not a rounding change. It is really an increase over the number proposed in Report No. 8. And it amounts to about a one million dollar increase.

BISHOP BARD: OK, thank you. So the minority report that is the motion before us is 2.6 percent. Thank you. Point of inquiry, Katie Dawson, mic. 5

KATIE DAWSON (Iowa): Katie Dawson. I am a White, clergy, female from Iowa. I have a question. Earlier today on the consent calendar, we had GCFA reports 1–7, and we took them off the consent calendar because they are items that we will address on Friday. So my question is, would this Report No. 8 have been one of those items that we would not have voted on until Friday, and does the motion to refer care for that?

BISHOP BARD: Report 8 does come back to us on Friday, whether this is redundant... We've done stranger things.

(laughter)

BISHOP BARD: I'm going to turn to Jay Brim for a point of inquiry. Than I'm going to turn to Andy Call, mic. 5, for a speech against.

JAY BRIM (Rio Texas): Bishop, I'm Jay Brim, a lay delegate from Rio Texas, older White male. My concern is whether we're sending a number to GCFA that has not yet been adopted and must be adopted when it comes back to us on Friday after GCFA has relied on it. And what position the body would be in if it then fails?

BISHOP BARD: GCFA has some guidance in the report. I mean, we are referring a number to them. I believe we heard from the General Secretary that that is number they will be working with. And the body will have to make a final decision on Friday. We cannot leave here without passing a budget. It does present an interesting puzzle. But that's where we're at.

Andy Call. Mic. 5, speech against.

ANDY CALL (East Ohio): Thank you, Bishop. Andy Call, clergy, East Ohio, adult, White, cisgender, male. There's no truth to the rumor that I only came to the microphone because today is also my birthday.

(cheering)

BISHOP BARD: Happy birthday.

CALL: Thank you. I am against the referral for two reasons. One, I do want to hear what Dave Nuckols has to say. Because I trust Dave, and I think that's there's some wisdom in hearing another voice on this. I'm also, in general, against the referral back to GCFA. I believe that, as I understood it, essentially the minority report was to go back to what GCFA had already suggested. Referring it back to them, even though it has some stipulation to what we've asked them to report back on Friday, is substantively to put it back in the hands of the people that crafted it in the first place and I believe we have a responsibility as the body of the General Conference to deal with this, not simply to kick it back to where it came from. Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. We've had two speeches for, two speeches against. I'm going to call on Jonathan Page, mic. 1. Mic. 2 works well, also.

JONATHAN PAGE (Virginia): Great. Jonathan Page, clergy, Virginia, White, male, shiny head. I'd like to move to close debate.

BISHOP BARD: That motion is in order. We've had two speeches for, two speeches against the motion to refer. The motion to close debate, is there a second? It's not debatable. If you'd get your devices ready, we will vote on whether to close debate on the motion to refer. This requires a two thirds vote in the affirmative. We will now proceed to the vote.

Please vote now.

You've voted 671 to 38 to end debate. So we're going to move to the motion to refer. This is the motion to refer Calendar Item 542 to GCF and A. With a report back Friday, May 3, 2024, in spite of Scott Brewer continuing to write 2025 on the piece of paper.

[Yes, 671; No, 38]

(laughter)

The motion to refer is before us. If you would refer Calendar Item 542 to GCF and A, you will vote yes. If you would not refer it, you will vote no. Please vote now.

(pause)

I see some checker flags here. A checkered flag over there.

(pause)

Has everyone who would like to vote had a chance to vote?

I'm going to close the voting. Here are the results: 342 votes to refer; 372 votes in opposition to refer. Calendar Item 542 is not referred. It remains before the body.

[Yes, 342; No, 372]

I'd like to invite Dave Nuckols to go to mic. 1 and propose his amendment.

NUCKOLS: Thank you, Bishop. And thank you, my friend, Andy Call. I'd like to make an amendment to the minority report that has been the main motion, and I'd like to speak to it if a second comes. Should I read the amendment?

BISHOP BARD: Yes.

NUCKOLS: Amend the petition by changing the base rate by year as follows: 2025 and 2026, 2.6 percent. 2027 and 2028, 2.9 percent.

BISHOP BARD: Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP BARD: You may speak to it.

NUCKOLS: I'm asking the page bring a typo-free copy of the amendment.

BISHOP BARD: Much appreciated.

NUCKOLS: And I say that in humor to my friend, Scott. I think these two things are true, friends. I think most of us in the United States are facing significant financial pressure following disaffiliation and COVID. And many of us feel that significant relief from apportionments is appropriate at this time. And I believe that many of us in the United States and in the worldwide church have a

great value placed on connectionalism. Connectional ministries, the work of the general church through such things as Discipleship Ministries and Higher Education and the General Board of Global Missions. And we have great belief in some of our funds such as the Black College Fund and Africa University Fund. So if we keep the base rate as proposed, a cut of 21 percent for two years, that gives us some relief for a couple of years while we work through things. And if we raise it back to 2.9 in the last two years, that will bring us closer to where we have traditionally been. We were just three and a quarter

BISHOP BARD: Thank you, seven seconds

NUCKOLS: 3.3 recently. It had been as high as a 5-percent share in decades past, so I think this motion will please, I hope, a lot of people.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. The amendment is before us. If you to speak to the amendment, please enter your name in the speaker pool now.

(pause)

I'll go to mic. 3, Bill Brownson, for a speech against.

BILL BROWNSON (West Ohio): Bill Brownson, lay, West Ohio Conference, not old yet. It will not surprise my friend Dave Nuckols that I'm speaking against this petition—this amendment, rather. It's important to note that hundreds of people over the years invested thousands of hours to come up with this original recommendation. And it is not just GCFA's recommendation. It is the Connectional Table's and GCFA's recommendation. And at the meeting at which there was a vote, which was hard—everybody understands this is hard—at that meeting, that vote passed unanimously by the GCFA board and there was a single no vote from the Connectional Table that was voting.

I want to affirm what Don House said originally. This is about centering the local church. And if you are a large church, to pick on the smaller church forecast of the impact of a 2.9, we would be signaling to churches who might have the capacity to invest in a youth minister or youth leader, "Hold off. Your apportionments are going to go up in the second half of the quadrennium." Those are not the kind of decision that I think we should be putting the local church in. We should not support this amendment to the minority report that was previously passed. I urge your vote against it.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you, Lydia Muñoz, mic. 5, a speech for.

(pause)

LYDIA MUÑOZ (Eastern Pennsylvania): Lydia Muñoz, Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, clergy, Latina. I speak in favor of the amendment because Dave Nuckols always has the words that I want to say, so I'm a little jelly. But I speak in favor of it because I know of the impact of the church, especially with my Latin-a siblings around the world and in particularly in these United States. We continue to grow the services, the resources, the way that the church has intentionally tried to connect with the Latin-a population that continues to grow is impacted through the work of the general agencies. And so, the understanding of how our connectional giving is connected to the mission and vision of the church is so important and, especially now that we're considering to finally allow Spanish to be one of our official languages, I just urge that we continue to support this work to really extend *la mesa de Dios* as part of our giving. People love to give when they see their dollars making an impact throughout the connection. I support this amendment.

BISHOP BARD: Michael Watts, mic. 5, speech against. And then I'm going to go to Jørgen Thaarup, mic. 2, for a speech for.

MICHAEL WATTS (Kentucky): Thank you, Bishop. Michael Watts, older adult, layperson, Kentucky Annual Conference. I'm here to speak against this amendment. I look at it in two different ways. The first is from the local church perspective, as I am a local church treasurer, and I have to deal with the expenses of the local church every day. In our local church we have had reductions because of COVID and disaffiliation of our members attending and our membership. While our church didn't even have a vote on disaffiliation, we've had people disaffiliating over the last few years. We also have had to make difficult decisions related to finances concerning staffing, and it has been very difficult for our church. And I don't think our church is unique. We have approximately about half the number of people in attendance every morning or every Sunday morning. And we also have seen our dollars decrease as a result. We've had reduction from two services to one service. And then from the annual conference standpoint, it's been very difficult for us. We use a tithing model, and we ask church to provide 10 percent of their income. But when we look at what at what our church—or what our annual conference is paying, we're paying 33 percent in our budget for the general church.

Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. Mic. no. 2.

JØRGEN THAARUP (Denmark): Thank you. My name is Jørgen Thaarup. I am from the Denmark Annual Conference, and I am grey and original Viking, and I am happy to be here.

(laughter)

And I want to speak in favor of the amendment, of the only reason that the amendment indicates a higher apportionment in the future. As a European delegate this discussion is really strange. And I see it only as a sign of American culture. We in Europe, we are all very small churches compared to America. But our apportionment level are on a level two or three time what you are talking about here. We have never discussion about apportionment. We are happy to pay the apportionment and do it as the first. It is the same with the tax to the state. We pay happily our tax to the state and will raise it higher if needed because we trust in the state. What we hear your discussion is that you want to low your payment and you are not trusting in the future of the church. Of course the apportionments will grow. I vote in favor of this amendment.

BISHOP BARD: Mic. 1, Kirk Nave, and then I am going to call on—oops. Never mind.

KIRK NAVE (Virginia): Is mic. 2 all right?

BISHOP BARD: Yes, mic. 2. Yes, thank you.

NAVE: Kirk Nave, clergy, Virginia Annual Conference, White, almost old. This is wonderful that we are having the conversation Dave Nuckols is an old and new friend—we were children together in the same congregation—my friend Jorgen that I have gotten to meet here. Healthy conversation however, it may not sound like a large proportion, but I'm on the Virginia Conference on Finance and Administration. This is asking another half million dollars each year—with Dave's amendment, it would be only two years instead of four, so it would be nearly one million dollars. What we're trying to balance is the financial health of our general church. Perhaps at the expense of the financial stability of the local church, and I would just remind us the local church is the primary agent where disciples are made, and I would rather support the local church in this difficult time. We in Virginia promised our people last year that we, while we lost 11 percent of our revenue due to disaffiliation, we would bring similar cuts to our annual conference. If this goes forth with a 2.9 percent base rate, I don't think we'll be able to fulfill our promise to our people.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. We have had three speeches for and three against the amendment proposed by delegate Dave Nuckols. In accordance with Rule 7.3, given that, we are going to proceed to a vote. Just to note, there are five persons who had wanted to speak for, six against, and four persons wanted to close debate, but by our rules that happens automatically. We are now going to proceed to a vote on the amendment. The amendment would be to change the base rate. Keep it at 2.6 percent for 2025 and 2026 and raise to 2.9 percent for 2027 and 2028. That is the amendment. That is the question before you.

If you would support that, you would vote yes; if you do not support that, you would vote no. Please vote now.

(pause)

Seeing some hands up over there. Do you need tech help? Does everyone who wishes to vote have an opportunity to vote? I see two over here.

(pause)

It appears everyone has had a chance to vote. No? Has everyone had a chance to vote?

The voting is now closed. Let's see the results.

No applause please. Sighs of relief are perfectly appropriate. By a vote of 366 in the affirmative—if you would put those back up again—362 in the negative. The amendment carries. Calendar Item 542 as amended is now before us for further work.

[Yes, 366; No, 362]

If you wish to speak for or against or offer further modifications or amendments, please enter the speaker pool now.

We're getting a lot of—I'm going to call on Jay Williams, mic. 1, as speech for. A lot of close debates. We're going to let delegate Jay Williams, speak and then I'm just going to test and see where you are. With this many we can't officially use the motion to close debate but that's a good indication that many of you are ready to do so anyway. Mic. 1

JAY WILLIAMS (New England): Jay Williams, New England Conference, clergy. My pronouns are he/him/his, Black American. I'm queer. And I rise to speak in support of the amendment because I believe—or, sorry, in the support of the calendar item as amended. Because it actually represents a fair and balanced approach to bring both fiscally responsible to our present financial realities and to be a hopeful people who believe in the abundance of God's grace and the abundance of our capacity to give joyfully and sacrificially.

Money follows vision, and this increase allows us to set a target that will support ministry across our connectional church. It's unfortunate that we keep comparing a false binary where we pit the local church against the general church. In fact, we're a connectional church for a reason, and that this minor increase in the base rate to the general church, it allows for a redistribution of wealth through our apportionments from wealthier local churches who are able to pay to local churches who have less capacity to pay and access to resources. So in fact these gradual incremental increases in the base rate and now our amended calendar item benefits the local church. Through our World Service, through the Black College Fund, through our apportion giving. So I vote—I urge you to vote in favor of the motion as amended.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. I'm going to call on Cynthia Weems, mic. 2, to propose an amendment.

CYNTHIA WEEMS (Florida): Hello. Cynthia Weems, clergy, Florida, adult, White, female. In an attempt to build a bridge between a divided body, I seek to amend this report if I have a second.

BISHOP BARD: If you would state your amendment please.

WEEMS: OK, the amendment is that the base rate will increase from 2.6 to 2.9 what we just approved if the collection rate in the first two years is 90 percent or higher.

BISHOP BARD: You have a second. Please speak to it.

WEEMS: I was on the Financial Administration Legislative Committee where we did some of this work already. You have heard really compelling speeches on both sides. And we just had a very divided vote, and part of the vote came from a real sense in the room that we are entering a new day as a United Methodist denomination. I have never felt hopeful about our church. At the same time, having been the point person for disaffiliations in the Florida conference and walking with one hundred seventy-five churches as they left, I know the ramification of that for our conference, and a 35-percent reduction in our budget, \$5.6 million over the last two years. And I know I have some—I go into this next year or two with some trembling. Right?

We've heard some numbers about what our payout use to be, and I know in many of our settings our churches really seek to have a high payout rate and are very committed to apportionment giving. But, we're in a season of unknowns, and it seems to me that if the 90-percent threshold is a vitality index—and I think most of us would say that's true in our local churches and in our annual conferences—then that would absolutely be a reason to increase that base rate in the final two years of the quadrennium. Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. Let's clear the pool. What is now before us is the amendment proposed by Cynthia Weems which modifies the motion to include a caveat that the base rate will go up to 2.9 percent if the collection rate in '25 and '26 is 90 percent or greater. That is before you for discussion. If you wish to speak to it, please enter the pool. Bethany Amey has a point of inquiry, mic. 5.

BETHANY AMEY (Greater New Jersey): Bethany Amey, Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. My pronouns are she/her/hers, Korean. Laity. My question is if somebody could provide the last time that the collection was 90 percent.

BISHOP BARD: Is there someone in the house that might be able to do that. General Secretary Kumar, are you still here, and do you have that information?

Thank you. If you want to go to mic. 6, that would be wonderful.

KUMAR: Bishop, I'm still getting the figures. Just a minute. I don't have it with me right this minute.

BISHOP BARD: OK. Maybe while we are getting those, if it's okay with the house, we'll take the next speech, and I'll come back to you. Gary Henderson, mic. 5, speech against.

I will make sure we get that information before we vote.

GARY HENDERSON (East Ohio): I'm Gary Henderson, East Ohio, and I rise to stand against the current amendment. I think as United Methodists, we spend far too much time living the land of what we can see. And we don't live enough in the land of the God who is able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine. What we have before us is a compromise, already, between a divided house. We live in the land of safety for two years and then in the following two years, we dare raise the possibility that God is able to do something new in us. If this a new day, and I believe it is a new day, and God is doing a new thing, we've got to get out of the life boats and get into the deep water and believe that God is moving and stirring in an amazing new way, even in our money.

And what I learned as a fundraiser for "Imagine No Malaria" in \$77 million later, that the money that we don't have, it's in our pockets, friends. So, let's move on and believe that God is doing something new with us. Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. Speech for. I'd recognize Carlene Johnson at mic. 2. That was a speech against, Gary. I'd like to recognize Carlene Johnson at mic. 2 to speak for.

CARLENE JOHNSON (Florida): Carlene Johnson, laywoman from Florida. I am 33, so I think the monitors get to call me a young adult still. Maybe. I'm speaking to you as a person who, until December 31st of this last year, was the executive director of a non-profit that served children in helping them with literacy. And I give you that date because that was a vital ministry that closed because we did not have sufficient funding. I think there is a distinction that needs to be made between things that are vital and things that are sustainable. And sometimes things that are vital are not sustainable.

I think that this amendment is a great one because it allows us to hope, and it gives us the opportunity to budget based on what we know might come in. I say might—no one really knows what will come in. I think we can trust in God, and trusting in God does not mean that we have to blindly ignore our financial realities. It's really difficult to be in a position where you trust that God will come through, and then, sometimes, it doesn't. The money doesn't. God does.

And so I'd urge you to vote for this amendment because I think it speaks to our financial realities, and it allows us to hope for sustainability of vital ministries at a rate that is actually sustainable.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you, I'm going to call on Rukang Chikomb, mic. 2.

KUMAR: Bishop. I have the information, Bishop.

BISHOP BARD: Oh yes, please. Thank you, General Secretary Kumar.

KUMAR: If you will turn with me to volume number four, GCFA Report. Volume number four, GCFA Report. Go to p. no. 1821. If you see, in the last three columns, it should have 2018 was the last 90 percent was paid. And '17 was, what, 92.1 and 91.8. The last payment of 2018 was 90 percent. 90 percent was paid in 2018.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. So that answers the question. Back to mic. no.—

RUKANG CHIKOMB (North-West Katanga): 2.

BISHOP BARD: —2, thank you.

CHIKOMB: Bishop, Rukang Chikomb, North-West Katanga, and thank you, you got it right on my name. Thank you.

BISHOP BARD: Yay!

CHIKOMB: Bishop, I am against the amendment because of two things—the number one is “if” “If we do better, we can ‘blah, blah, blah’”. If we don't do better, when what? That's number one. Number two. Folks, the “minority report”. “Minority report”. Do we have any issues minority report. You've showed the power of a house that is together with God's faithful people. It prevailed. We just spent almost an hour because minority report prevailed. I have a hard time understanding that. I'm against the amendment, and let's go back, support this minority. We know about minorities' issues, please.

BISHOP BARD: I'm going to call on Beverly Wilkes-Null, mic. 4, for a point of inquiry. And then, Jim Allen, if you'd also go to mic. 4, you have an other parliamentary that you'd like to address.

BEVERLY WILKES-NUL (Illinois Great Rivers): Beverly Wilkes-Null, African American, clergy, woman, Illinois-Great Rivers Conference. Pronouns she, her, and hers. My inquiry, Bishop, is Rule 23.8.

BISHOP BARD: Go ahead.

WILKES-NUL: It is a non-debatable request that we pause and pray in this moment, and I would ask you to lead us now.

BISHOP BARD: That is very much in order, so we're just going to take a moment to breathe. And to pray. And then move forward.

(pause)

Veni Sancte Spiritus. Come, Spirit, come. Fill our hearts with your peace. Fill our minds with wisdom. Fill our souls with joy. Come, Spirit, come. Amen.

I had said I was going to call on Jim Allen, mic. 4.

JIM ALLEN (Tennessee): Bishop, the issue I was going to raise has been resolved by a question by another delegate. So, I will withdraw.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. I would like to call on Odell Horne, Mic. 5.

ODELL HORNE (North Georgia): Odell Horne, laity, North Georgia Conference. Bishop, I move the previous question.

BISHOP BARD: And you would like to move that on the amendment?

HORNE: The amendment, that is correct.

BISHOP BARD: OK. The motion to move the previous question is a motion to end debate on the amendment proposed by Cynthia Weems. That amendment would have raised the base rate to 2.9 percent, which we've already approved in 2027 and 2028, but added the condition, only if receipts in the prior two years were 90 percent or the prior year was 90 percent. Is it two, both, two years? Please. If you would read the amendment that would be helpful. Thanks.

GARY GRAVES (Kentucky, Secretary of the General Conference): Thank you, Bishop. The motion is to amend by addition. That the base rate will increase from 2.6 percent in 2025 and 2026 to 2.9 percent in 2027 and 2028 if the collection rate is 90 percent or higher in the first two years.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you. So that is what will be before us if we vote to close debate. So the current motion is to close debate. Get your devices ready, if you would close debate. Before we do that, by the rule, I need to let you know there were eight people in the pool with speeches in favor of the amendment, two people with speeches against, and no one proposing an

amendment to the amendment. So if you would vote to close debate—the motion requires a two-thirds majority to carry—you would press *one (1)*. If you would like to continue to discuss the amendment, you would press *two (2)*. Please vote now.

(*pause*)

Thank you, Ron. Is everyone? Are your devices all working? It appears that everyone who would like to vote has voted. Let's close the poll, and let's see the results. You voted to end debate on the amendment proposed by Cynthia Weems. You supported that 695 in the affirmative, 34 in the negative.

[*Yes, 695; No, 34*]

We're now going to vote on the amendment. And I would ask the Secretary of General Conference to read it one more time.

GRAVES: That the base rate will increase from 2.6 percent in 2025 and 2026 to 2.9 percent in 2027 and 2028. If the collection rate is 90 percent or higher in the first two years.

BISHOP BARD: Thank you, that is before us. If you would support that amendment, you would vote yes, if not you would vote no. Please vote now.

(*pause*)

So, right directly in front of me there was a flag. Thank you. Looks like that may be cared for. Others? Give it ten more seconds. Let's close the poll. Oops—there's a flag. I'm sorry, there's a flag way in the back.

(*pause*)

Thank you, if we could see the results? The amendment is supported. 461 in the affirmative, 272 in the negative.

[*Yes, 461; No, 272*]

Calendar Item 542, as we have been working on it for some time now, is before us. My sense is we may be getting to a point where you would like to vote on this calendar item as we have amended it. If there are no objections, I'd like to move to that vote. This is like silent prayer, and I am hearing you. We're going to move to vote on Calendar Item 542 as it has been amended. If you would support this item as amended, you'll vote *one (1)*, if not, you'll vote *two (2)*. Please vote now.

BISHOP BARD: Everyone who would like to vote had an opportunity to vote. Not seeing any checkered flags. Let's close the polls. And let's see the results.

On Calendar Item 542 as amended. 640 in the affirmative. 94 in the negative.

[*Yes, 640; No, 94*]

You have supported this calendar item and done wonderful work on it. Give yourselves a round of applause.

(*applause*)

Friends, we did some heavy lifting during that time; worked through minority reports, multiple amendments, and I simply want to thank you for your good work.

As I close and we move toward a break, I want to remind us of the audaciousness of what we are doing. We are working to build God's beloved community in the name of the risen Christ. A community that breaks down dividing walls of nation, race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language, and opinion. And we are doing so in a world where every difference quickly is magnified into a chasm, and we rapidly retreat into enclaves of homogeneity. If this beloved community work were simple and easy, most of Paul's letters in the New Testament would either have never been written or would be much shorter. And this is the work of Christ, and this is the work of the Spirit. Thank you for your work, and thank you for letting me lead you in this session. We are on a break.

(*applause*)

We will return at 4:05 and at that time you will be in the very capable hands of Bishop John Schol. I want to thank Bishop Hauptert-Johnson and Bishop Williamston behind me, and thank you all.

Plenary 2

BISHOP JOHN R. SCHOL: We are at the 4:06 hour, and we do have an order of the day, so we're going to go to the opening of the session now. Friends, my name is John Schol, and I serve the Eastern Pennsylvania and Greater New Jersey annual conferences. And it is my joy to be with you this afternoon as we work through some important matters. Supporting me today are Bishop Alfred Norris and also Bishop Lanette Plambeck.

(cheers)

She still has her support group, that's wonderful, it's wonderful.

As we begin today, I'm going to ask Bishop Norris if he would go to the podium and lead us in our opening time. Bishop Norris has been mentor of mine and has helped me in many ways as I have been a bishop, but one of the ways that he has particularly helped me is raising money from bishops for the Black College Fund, and he has mentored me in that, and I had the opportunity to do that recently back in March, and let me just say his methods work very well. But he's also a great spiritual leader, and, Bishop Norris, I'm going to invite you to lead us in an opening song as we begin.

(singing led by Bishop Norris)

(applause)

Bishop Norris, I'm going to ask you to stay and pray for us, and as we pray today, we want to lift up two of the families, two families of our bishops. First, we want to lift up Bishop Héctor Burgos, whose mother-in-law died yesterday, and he has gone back to upper New York to be with the family and with Jazelis, and so we want to remember the Burgos family. Also, our colleague Bishop Mike McKee's mother died today, and so we want to remember Bishop McKee and the family also. So, Bishop Norris, would you lead us in prayer today?

BISHOP ALFRED L. NORRIS: Let us unite our hearts in prayer. Eternal God, we are aware that your love for all of your children is boundless. We acknowledge today that we are in a General Conference of The United Methodist Church where the children called United Methodist are gathered to do the business of the church. We also recognize that we are brothers and sisters and whatever concerns one of us concerns all of us. Whatever joys there are to be celebrated, we all celebrate them together. Whatever sorrow comes in our midst, we all experience this experience together. And so we pray especially for the families of our colleagues who have been mentioned, and we pray for them especially because we know that their love for their parents and for their families, their love is deep and our love for them is deep as well. We pray that you will bring comfort and strength and compassion to all of us who mourn and grieve. And may we all realize that together we can overcome any- and everything because we are your children. Bless us all as we proceed in this General Conference. And bless the families of those that have been mentioned in a special way. For we ask it in the name of him who is the resurrection and the life, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BISHOP SCHOL: Amen. Thank you very much.

Division on Ministries with Young People Response

This morning you adopted and modified our agenda that as this time there would be an order of the day in which there would be a response to the Judicial Council ruling about youth serving on the Commission of General Conference. Here to give that response is Maggie Taylor and Connor Prusha, and we invite to come at this time and share their response.

MAGGIE TAYLOR (Tennessee, Co-chair of the Division on Ministries with Young People): Good afternoon, General Conference, and thank you for this opportunity to respond to Judicial Council Decision No. 1497 found on *DCA* p. 2194. My name is Maggie Taylor. I'm a lay delegate from the legacy Tennessee Conference. I'm a young adult biracial female.

CONNOR PRUSHA (East Ohio, Co-chair of the Division on Ministries with Young People): And I am Connor Prusha. I am a lay delegate from the East Ohio Conference, and I am a White male young adult.

TAYLOR AND PRUSHA: We are the co-chairs of the Division on Ministries with Young People.

PRUSHA: The Division on Ministries with Young People, or DMYP, is a group composed of youth, young adults, and adult workers from every jurisdiction and central conference tasked with empowering young people as world-changing disciples of Jesus Christ, nurturing faith development, and equipping young people to be effective leaders for both the church of today and the church of tomorrow. Our work calls us to challenge The United Methodist Church to embrace, confirm, and celebrate God's call on the lives of young people and advocate for the issues and concerns of young people in the church and global community. Over the last eight years, our group has worked to build a strong network of support and provide resources that connect the diverse experiences of youth and young adults in local ministries and communities across the globe. Friends, as stated in our young people's address earlier this week, it's no secret that the last several years have been difficult for many. But especially so for young people. Throughout the COVID pandemic, young people lost critical opportunities for in-person learning as well graduations and other cultural ceremonies. Many experienced the epidemic of loneliness, isolation, and one of the worst mental health crises to date. Youth around the world have been impacted by collected trauma, economic pressures, social injustice, and the list just keeps going. One additional side effect of the COVID pandemic is that it has limited new youth and young adults from being lifted up for leadership. For instance, I was elected to the DMYP when I was sixteen and in high school. Now I am twenty-four, have a master's degree and married and work for a general agency. Friends, we could blame the postponements of General Conference or examine whether we did our best to prioritize young people in our General Conference elections. Regardless, there are no seated youth at this conference. It is critical that as we move forward we not only keep in mind the importance of youth in our local churches but also in the planning for our general church.

TAYLOR: Youth representation on the commission is vitally important for the sake of just and equitable fulfillment of the General Conference's work. I stated the commission plans to be to pertain to the full participation of the General Conference including the voice of young people at the table is an important step in this work towards full participant of young people for the life and leadership of the church. For example, the General Conference is often held during important periods of the academic year, which can limit youth presence and participation. Youth on the commission can speak to these unique concerns and barriers to participation at the General Conference level and their vision for the future. Since the announcement of the ruling, members of the DMYP who are here at General Conference have worked to identify youth who are gifted and equipped for this position. We bring before this body youth, who ages defined under the age of eighteen and in the United States and under the age of twenty-four in central conferences, would be considered on the slate of nominations for the Commission on the General Conference. We celebrate that there are many called and equipped young people across our connection; therefore, we do not lift up a single youth but instead names of five youth representing central and jurisdictional conferences. I need a little help now, so in closing, Bishop, we'd like to make a motion.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you very much for your report. What was scheduled for today was a report; there was not listed a motion with that. But you want, as I understand it, you want to reopen the nominations for the General Commission.

TAYLOR: Yes, Bishop.

BISHOP NORRIS: We do have another calendar item of the day and so we are going to take that first and I want to relook at the Judicial Council ruling to make sure we're in order. So if you could just stay steady here on the stage, and once we get clarity on that we'll come back to you.

TAYLOR: Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you.

Now we have another item for us today—

(*applause*)

Amen, yes.

Calendar Items

BISHOP SCHOL: We have another item that we must take at this time and that concerns the election of Judicial Council members, which we will be doing tomorrow, and so I am going to call on Alex Shanks to come and present that legislation.

ALEX SHANKS (Florida): Thank you, Bishop. My name is Alex Shanks. I'm a clergy delegate from the Florida Conference, a White male, adult, and I was honored to chair the Judicial Administration Legislative Committee. I was supported by the vice-chair, Tolbert Nyenswah, the secretary, Beth Givens, and our two subcommittee chairs, Belton Joyner and Kent Fulton.

Early in our work you referred this to the Judicial Administration Legislative Committee for us to work on as a group, and so you will find on p. 2177, p. 2177, Calendar Item 76. Calendar Item 76 amends paragraph 2602.1 of our *Discipline*. It passed the Judicial Administration Legislation Committee, 44 in favor and 2 against. So it should have appeared on the Consent Calendar, but it was lifted off the Consent Calendar.

The purpose of this petition is to clarify how elections will happen at this General Conference for the Judicial Council. You will note there on the p. 2177 that to keep consistency we are suggesting that the terms of all of the current Judicial Council members will end at the adjournment of this General Conference. All of them have either served eight or twelve years and the maximum number of years is eight. So we would elect at this General Conference nine members of the Judicial Council; five of them would be elected to eight-year terms, and four of them would be elected to four-year terms.

Moving forward, the terms would continue to be eight years and would continue to rotate between a majority of lay and clergy. If adopted, these changes would go into place effective immediately so that we can move forward with our election.

We have heard the concern about consistency among the Judicial Council. If you pass this petition, that will be in the hands of the delegates to elect some of the current members to a new term.

So again, this Calendar Item 76. It comes with a great amount of support from the Judicial Administration Legislative Committee, and we move that it is passed by the body.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, Item No. 76 is now before us. We'll now open the pool. Opening the pool for any discussion.

(*pause*)

All right, we're going to go to Olandor Price, Boyce, I'm sorry, to mic. no. 1. He is from Liberia. Mic. no. 1. It is a matter of parliamentary.

L. OLANDOR BOYCE (Liberia): L. Olandor Boyce, lay delegate, Liberia Annual Conference.

Bishop, if I'm in order, I request to make a motion for declaratory decision.

BISHOP SCHOL: What is the matter on?

BOYCE: I move that in accordance—

BISHOP SCHOL: Just a second, is it regarding what is before us right now?

BOYCE: No, Bishop.

BISHOP SCHOL: OK, that is not in order at this time. We do have a matter before us concerning the Judicial Council. Just tell me what it is in reference to and then I'll make sure we come back to you.

BOYCE: It's in reference to upholding paragraph 408.1b and 357. One with regards to elections of bishops in the central conference.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you very much. I'll return to you later in the afternoon.

BOYCE: Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you. All right, we do have a motion to amend and I'm going to go to Sara Tiainen, mic. no. 2. Sara Tiainen, mic. no. 2.

SARA TIAINEN (Finland-Swedish Provisional): Thank you, Bishop. My name is Sara Tiainen, female, White, adult, clergy delegate, from the Finland-Swedish Provisional Annual Conference.

I move to amend the petition.

BISHOP SCHOL: That is in order.

TIAINEN: I move that paragraph 2602.1 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* be amended as follows.

BISHOP SCHOL: I'm sorry, I thought you were amending the legislation that is before us. It is the legislation that can be amended at this time.

TIAINEN: Yes, I would want to insert an end of the subparagraph.

BISHOP SCHOL: So, you would have to refer to something that was presented to the floor, to the body, and that was Calendar Item 76.

TIAINEN: Yes, I would like to, instead of the suggested text in the original petition, suggest something else and not an amendment.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, oh, suggest something else and not an amendment?

TIAINEN: Or replace. To replace.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, let's try and work together—

TIAINEN: OK.

BISHOP SCHOL: to see what it is you're trying to do.

TIAINEN: OK.

BISHOP SCHOL: So, we're on Calendar Item 76.

TIAINEN: Yes.

BISHOP SCHOL: That's found on p. 2087, if you could direct me to what part of that item you would like to amend, that would help me and the body.

TIAINEN: Yes. So instead of the petition that has been put before us by the legislative committee—

BISHOP SCHOL: Yes.

TIAINEN: we would instead wish to insert at the end another type of formulation.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, let me be clear. Are you wanting to substitute or just add words to what is already there?

TIAINEN: Substitute.

BISHOP SCHOL: You would like to strike everything that is there and add a substitute? Is that correct?

TIAINEN: Yes.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, a substitute is in order.

TIAINEN: Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: As we have said before, in terms of a substitute we do that by amendment. As the speaker has already said, she would like to delete everything that is in Calendar Item No. 6—or 76—and replace it with what she is now about to say. You may read that to us now.

TIAINEN: Thank you, Bishop. So I would then insert at the end of the subparagraph:

“To provide a continuing membership on the Judicial Council, members elected”—Am I allowed to proceed?

BISHOP SCHOL: Yes, please proceed.

TIAINEN: OK, sorry, yeah.

“members elected in 2016 may continue to serve until the next regular session of the General Conference in 2028, notwithstanding the provision in paragraph 1. In the postponed 2020 General Conference in 2024, two clergy persons and two laypersons shall be elected; in 2028, three clergy persons and two laypersons; and in 2032, one clergy person and three laypersons.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, is there a second? I did hear a second. So, if I understand you correctly, those who are elected in 2016 would continue on the Judicial Council until 2028.

TIAINEN: Eight, yes.

BISHOP SCHOL: And that today or tomorrow when we do elections for the Judicial Council, we would elect two clergy and two lay. Is that correct?

TIAINEN: Yes, two clergy and two lay, yes.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. That is what is before us. Would you like—

(pause)

Very good. Thank you.

We’re on p. 2177, 2177, Calendar Item No. 76. There has been a motion to substitute. You’ve heard the substitute read. I’ve given you the basis or the basics of that substitute. There has been a second and you may now speak to it.

TIAINEN: Thank you, Bishop.

Under the current rule of paragraph 2602.1, the term of all nine members of the Judicial Council would expire at the end of this postponed 2020 General Conference. Replacing the entire membership at once would severely disrupt the continuous and effective functioning of a constitutional body so vital to The United Methodist Church. What would the implications be if the wisdom of this whole body was lost? I believe that we currently need this wisdom and the continuation of some of the Judicial Council members. The amendment would provide continuing membership by allowing the Judicial Council to have staggered elections as it was intended and the rotation between clergy and would allow it to transition well to a post-pandemic era. Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you very much, and just to clarify again you’re indicating that five members of the Judicial Council who are currently serving and elected in 2016 would continue until 2028.

TIAINEN: Yes, sir.

BISHOP SCHOL: And then four would be elected probably tomorrow when we do the Judicial Council elections that would serve until 2032.

TIAINEN: Yes, sir.

BISHOP SCHOL: OK and can you bring your substitute to us? That is a speech in favor.

And I want to remind you that we are just asking, Should we substitute this legislation for what was presented in our *DCA*, Calendar Item 76? So we’re not going to ask you to vote—or to speak for or against. But, just the reason why this would be beneficial to either support this or not to support it.

So we’ve had one speech for and we’ll go now to a speech against, and I’m going to go to Effie McAvoy, mic. no. 1.

EFFIE MCAVOY MCCLAIN (New England): Good afternoon, Bishop. Good afternoon, church. Effie McAvoy, she, her, New England Annual Conference, clergy.

We have been through a lot since 2019. There has been a lot that has been accomplished in this General Conference gathering thus far that shows that the church is ready to move forward in a direction that would call us all to be with one accord. So in these elections of the Judicial Council, I would consider that the persons who have put themselves up to be reelected and those persons who have been nominated from the floor would suffice. On those lists of persons there are persons who are currently serving on the Judicial Council. The body has the right then to choose from those persons who are currently serving if they want them to continue. I trust the work of the committee that has done the work to say and present to us what is already before us in the DCA. So that is my speech against the amendment. I think we should let the body decide who we want to make judgment over us in this new day of United Methodism. Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you very much. That is a speech against.

We've had one speech for and one speech against this substitute.

We're now going to go to a speech for. We're going to invite Julius Nelson to go to mic. 1 and then I'm also going to invite Helen Ryde to go to mic. no. 3 as a speech against.

JULIUS NELSON (Liberia): Bishop, I'm on mic. no. 2.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, mic. no. 2 works as well.

NELSON: Julius Nelson, Liberia Annual Conference, clergy, African.

At the beginning of this postponed 2020 UMC General Conference, the Council of Bishops president called to order that we are convening in the postponed 2020 General Conference. Therefore, as far as we are concerned, since 2016, we are meeting in the four-year cycle to open this meeting in the 2020 postponed General Conference. If that is so, then those who were elected in 2016 have served their first four years and should be given the opportunity for the eight years before they leave the Judicial Council. Additionally with all that we have gone through, we really need continuity and if 2602 [2026] or to talk about the term that it was served when we elected them in 2016, they were informed for that particular cycle to be maintained. And that is what I'm supporting the amendment so that the colleagues who were elected in 2016 can be given the four years and then in 2028 they can then go through that particular cycle for them to leave the Judicial Council, it being a terminate year since 2016 and 2019 and all that we have gone through, the Judicial Council need some continuity in the best interest of The United Methodist Church. Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you very much. We've had two speeches for and one speech against.

Our secretary Gary Graves has some information that would be important to this substitute.

GARY GRAVES: It is information regarding the election process. I would like to share with you that we have received communication from two persons who were listed on the nominations list who have decided to withdraw their names from consideration. The first is Deanell Tacha. The second is Warren Plowden.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you very much. And, Secretary Graves, are both of those in the class that we're talking about as it relates to the substitute?

GRAVES: We're confirming that at the moment. I don't have that information.

BISHOP SCHOL: That would be important information for us to have because the substitute would continue those persons even if they were not willing to serve. So we want to make sure that those who are being recommended to continue to serve are willing to serve.

(pause)

It appears in the class that is under consideration that there is one of the Judicial Council members who is not willing to continue to serve. I'm going to rule this out of order because it would not fulfill the necessary people to serve on the Judicial Council. So I'm going to rule the substitute out of order, which was to continue all five of those elected in 2016.

All right, we are now back to Calendar Item No. 76 as it's listed on p. 2177. We're going to clear the pool so that we can take persons to speak to that.

(pause)

We've not had any speeches for or against, so we're going to take a speech against. We have one speech against, and I'm going to turn to Rite Smith, mic. no. 2, Northern Illinois. I'm sorry, Rita Smith.

RITA SMITH (Northern Illinois): Rita L. Smith, Northern Illinois Conference. This is really interesting because I put my name in for opposition to the amendment,

BISHOP SCHOL: Ah.

SMITH: not to this actual petition. I'm in favor of the actual petition.

BISHOP SCHOL: Very good.

SMITH: OK.

BISHOP SCHOL: Would you like—while you're there—

(laughter)

Yeah, we're going to clear the pool one more time to make sure we have the persons in the pool who would like to speak to Calendar Item No. 76 as found on p. 2177. The pool has been cleared; we invite those to go back into the pool who would like to speak for or against.

(pause)

All right, we only have persons who would like to speak for, so we're first going to go to Dale, or Gail Douglas Boykin, mic. no. 3, New York.

GAIL DOUGLAS BOYKIN (New York): Good afternoon, Bishop. Gail Douglas Boykin, New York Annual Conference, deaconess, laity, and adult.

I would like to support Calendar Item No. 76, in that there are actually candidates who have Judicial Council experience, so for those that are worried that there will not be continuity on the council, I urge you to reconsider, because all of the previous rulings, there's easy access to them, and if this, in fact, is a new day that we are going forward from, I would encourage you to support Calendar Item 76. Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you very much. We're going to go to Paul Ketoka, mic. no. 4, a speech in favor. Mic. no. 4.

PAUL KETOKA: (East Congo): *(simultaneous interpretation from French)* Thank you. I answer to Rev. Paul Ketoka *(indecipherable)*, from the Annual Conference of East Congo.

Bishop, I support this article because of the fact that the people who are elected and who have worked, who have experience, we can't change all of those people. Perhaps, since we are talking about people who are leaving the Church, we need to have people to replace them. So I am in favor of this article 76. Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you very much. We've had two speeches for, no speeches against. I'm going to go—

We have a "other parliamentary." I'm going to ask Audun Westad from Norway, mic. no. 2.

AUDUN WESTAD (Norway): Bishop, my name is Audun Westad, lay delegate, Norway Annual Conference, and I'm sorry but I went into the wrong number on the speaker, but I only have the question for you as the presiding officer. Is that in order, or should I go back?

BISHOP SCHOL: Is it a parliamentary inquiry?

WESTAD: Yeah, I have a question regarding ruling the amendment out of order when it was first ruled in order. How that is possible, according to our rules.

BISHOP SCHOL: What is your question?

WESTAD: My question is regarding the amendment that Sarah Tiainen forwarded. The amendment was first ruled to be in order, and then it was ruled to be out of order. So I was just wondering how that's working.

BISHOP SCHOL: Well, the way that is working is my first ruling was that a substitute was in order. I didn't rule that the actual substitute was in order. When the substitute was presented, additional information came that there was at least one Judicial Council member that was not willing to continue to serve. That meant that the amendment—or the substitute—could not be implemented. And that's why I ruled it out of order.

WESTAD: OK, thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you very much. We have two speeches for; no one wants to speak against.

We do have a motion to close debate. I'm going to take that. That is Dalton Rushing, mic. no. 5.

DALTON RUSHING (North Georgia): Bishop, Dalton Rushing, clergy, North Georgia, White man. I move that we close debate.

BISHOP SCHOL: Is there a second? All right, that's been properly moved and seconded. It's not debatable. It needs a two-thirds vote. I'm going to ask now for the poll to come up, or the vote to come up so that we can vote on this. A vote of yes pressing no. *one (1)* would support closing debate; pressing no. *two (2)* would close debate. Please vote now.

I hear a little rumbling. Let me make sure we're all together.

Voting no. *one (1)* will close debate; voting no. *two (2)* will keep debate open and continuing the conversation about Item No. 76. Please vote now.

I have a flag down here in the front. Please raise your flags high so our technical people can come and assist you.

(pause)

I do not see any other flags. There's one in the back right. Please wave your flag high.

(pause)

Stand up if—Sometimes they can't see you if you're sitting down. If you are able to stand up and raise the flag, we'll be able to see you better.

Is there anyone still needing to vote? I do not hear anybody. Let us go to the vote. The poll, the vote is closed. Let us go to the results.

You have voted 696 in the affirmative. There are 23 voted no.

[Yes, 696; No, 23]

It meets the threshold of 66 percent. You have closed the debate.

We now go to Calendar Item No. 76. Again, voting yes would support Calendar Item No. 76 for the Judicial Council voting.

I invite you now if you would, are in favor of Calendar Item No. 76 to select *one (1)*. If you're not in favor, select *two (2)*. Please vote now.

(pause)

I think I see a flag back here on the right or maybe somebody's fanning themselves. I can't quite tell.

(laughter)

It was too cold earlier, now it's a little warm. So, no, it's not a little warm! It's warm over in this area. Somebody was fanning themselves. Everybody else is fine. OK.

I do not see any other flags. Is there anybody that still wants to vote? I think I see a flag all the way in the back on my left.

(pause)

Is there still anybody wanting to vote? All right, I do not see anybody. We'll now go to the results.

You have voted 654, yes, no, 56.

[Yes, 654; No, 56]

It passes. We'll use that tomorrow when we do our Judicial Council voting.

At this time I recognize Dee Strickley-Miner [Stickley-Miner] to present a motion.

And we thank Alex Shanks and the committee for their work on that.

(applause)

Yes, yeah, thank you.

We'll now go to mic. 3. Dee Strickley-Miner [Stickley-Miner].

DEE STICKLEY-MINER (West Ohio): Thank you, Bishop. My name is Dee Stickley-Miner, I am an ordained deacon, West Ohio, White female, adult.

I would like to make a motion to reconsider our vote on Calendar Item 18, Petition No. 20649, on p. 1993, that was amended and approved yesterday. I did vote in favor of Calendar Item 18, and if this motion is accepted, then I would like to make an amendment.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP SCHOL: It's been properly moved and seconded. It's a petition, calendar item, did you say No. 18?

STICKLEY-MINER: Correct. No. 18.

BISHOP SCHOL: And that's on page—

STICKLEY-MINER: 1993.

BISHOP SCHOL: 1993. And it is Item Petition—

STICKLEY-MINER: 20649.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. It's been moved and seconded. All right. Would you like to speak to that?

STICKLEY-MINER: Yes, thank you. Earlier this morning we heard from the Committee on Correlation that the action that we took was in conflict with paragraph 40. This body voted overwhelmingly to support the addition of two new bishops in Africa. And so I would like to reconsider our vote so that we can make corrections to the language to align the recommendation with what is required in paragraph 40 of our *Book of Discipline*.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. As I recall, this was in, was this in conflict with a constitutional item no. 40? Is that correct?

STICKLEY-MINER: Correct, paragraph 40.

BISHOP SCHOL: Paragraph 40, part of our Constitution, and again that essentially said that the General Conference doesn't determine the episcopal areas, it is the central conference that determines those episcopal areas. All right. Would you read your motion one more time?

STICKLEY-MINER: So you would like my motion? My motion would be on Calendar 18 that everywhere we see the words *episcopal area*, we would strike those words and replace it with "bishop."

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. Thank you very much. So first we need to vote on the reconsideration. It's been moved and seconded. I think you're ready to vote.

All those who would be in favor of reconsidering, please select *one (1)*. All of those opposed, please select *two (2)*. You may vote now.

(pause)

Is there anyone that would still like to vote? I do not see or hear anybody. We'll go to the results.

550 persons voted yes; 147 voted no.

[Yes, 550; No, 147]

It passes. The matter is reconsidered. We'll now come back to Delegate Dee Strickley-Miner [Stickley-Miner] to read again the motion.

STICKLEY-MINER: Thank you, Bishop.

So the amendment would be that everywhere we see *episcopal area*, we would delete those two words and replace it with *bishop*. The end result would be the same. There would be one new bishop assigned to the Congo Central Conference and one new bishop assigned to the current Africa Central Conference.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, that is moved and seconded. This is to address the matter that was brought to us earlier that we were in conflict with paragraph 40 of our Constitution. Do not see anybody in the pool. Are you ready to vote? All right, we're going to now move to the vote.

All who would approve, signify by selecting *one (1)*, all of those opposed by selecting *two (2)*. You may vote now.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, is there anyone still wanting to vote? All right, we'll close the vote. We'll now go to the result.

You have voted 667 yes, 49 no. It passes. We've addressed the issue.

[Yes, 667; No, 49]

Thank you for those who worked on that and helped us to get that in order. Thank you very much.

Our parliamentarian said to me, "This may sound crazy, but we just amended No. 18. Now we have to adopt it again." And is there any objection to us going right to a vote to adopt this entire petition? No? OK.

(laughter)

Did I hear a yes? All right, I did hear a yes. So now we will open the pool for anyone that would like to speak to it.

All right, we have a point of order, and I'm going to ask Manuel Rodrigues, mic. no. 4.

MANUEL RODRIGUES (Western Angola): Thank you, Bishop. Manuel Rodrigues.

BISHOP SCHOL: Please tell me what rule you're referring to.

RODRIGUES: That's difficult question.

(laughter)

BISHOP SCHOL: We need to know the rule—that's only way we'll be able to address your point of order. So, a point of order says we were not following our rules, and so we need to address something because we're not following our rules.

RODRIGUES: And a bit of help on that?

BISHOP SCHOL: A bit of help on that. Sounds like like you want to ask a parliamentary inquiry.

RODRIGUES: Yep.

BISHOP SCHOL: Why don't you try that.

(laughter)

RODRIGUES: So I'd like to. OK, let's go in Portuguese.

BISHOP SCHOL: Were going to go in Portuguese; please put your headsets on.

RODRIGUES: (*simultaneous interpretation from Portuguese*) Thank you so much, Bishop. My point of order is because there's Item 18 that was mentioned here the point is that the, the committee that spoke in the morning said that this was in accordance with paragraph 40 of *The Book of Discipline*. I believe that the committee should go back in the afternoon to really provide us with tangible information what was debated or not debated before we provide amendments and try to improve something that is not in conformity. I don't know if I was clear enough.

BISHOP SCHOL: Oh no, that was very clear. Thank you very much, and your question is a good question. The committee did reconvene, considered, and voted. And so we are in order.

All right, I have a parliamentary inquiry. Tolbert Nyenswah, mic. no. 1.

TOLBERT NYENSWAH (Liberia): Thank you, Bishop. I can forgive you because of (*indecipherable*) name from Liberia somewhere in the village, so I can forgive you. It's Nyeswah. Bishop, Tolbert Nyenswah, male from the Liberia Annual Conference, lay leader.

The amendment that she spoke about under 18, the Calendar Item 18, 20649, if you look at replacing the total eighteen "episcopal areas," she's correct to say "bishop," replacing that with "bishop." But if you go down the line and see "South Congo episcopal areas," and if you replace that with "bishop," then that's a conflict. So the mechanics of spelling areas names should not be things we vote on. That can be corrected by the secretary. Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. If there is an editorial issue, those will be corrected. But I think the intent is to make sure we conform to Constitution paragraph 40, and the body has done that. I believe there is no one to speak for or against, and so I'm going to go to Danny Peck, mic. no. 2, to close debate.

DANNY PECK (North Carolina): Bishop, Danny Peck, North Carolina Annual Conference. I move to close debate.

BISHOP SCHOL: That is in order. Is there a second? It's been moved and seconded. That is before us. Just so that you know there are a number persons in to close debate and there is just other parliamentary questions so we're going to move to close debate. It is not debatable. It requires a two-thirds vote.

We'll go to the vote now. If you would like to close debate, please select no. *one* (1). If you would like continue debate, please select no. *two* (2). Please vote now.

(pause)

All right. Has everybody voted that would like to vote? All right, we'll go to the results.

685 have voted yes; 19 have voted no. We have closed debate.

[Yes, 685; No, 19]

We will now go immediately to approving again Calendar Item No. 18.

All of those who would support Calendar Item No. 18, please select *one (1)*; those who are opposed, please select no. *two (2)*. Please vote now.

(pause)

BISHOP SCHOL: Is there still anyone wanting to vote? I do not see anyone, let's go to the results. You have voted 672 yes, 38 no. It passes.

[Yes, 672; No, 38]

Now, I've not forgot our youth, but we do have some calendar items that have financial matters attached to them, so we're going to need to go to those next. The first is April Casperson and Eric Swanson. I invite you to come and present at this time.

APRIL CASPERSON (West Ohio): Good afternoon, my name is April Casperson. Clergy, ordained deacon, West Ohio Conference in the United States, adult, female, multiracial, and my pronouns are she and her.

I have the honor of chairing the Higher Education and Superintendency Legislative Committee. I am eternally thankful for our capable, calm, and Spirit-filled leadership team. I offer a specific word of appreciation for our vice-chair, and also she is a parliamentarian, Aleze Fulbright. I also lift up the wonderful members of the team, our secretary, Carlene Johnson; our assistant secretary, Francisco Neto; and our sub-chairs, Luis Reyes, Eric Swanson, and George Weagba.

The item before us today is found on p. 2237 of the *DCA*, Calendar Item No. 547. The petition number is 20963, and you can find it on p. 1615 and p. 1616 in the *ADCA*, volume 3. The committee voted to adopt this petition as submitted, and the rationale was that it was the desire of the body to move forward the work of the Jurisdictional Study Committee and honor their work. Since the Jurisdictional Study had not yet presented when we had to vote, we felt that it was the best course of action of all of the proposed plans to honor the work of the Jurisdictional Study Committee and bring it forward for all to share in today. Bishop, the petition is before the body.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, it is properly before us. We will now open the pool. Register if you would like to speak. All right, we do have an amendment. We'll go to mic. no. 3, Frederick Brewington.

FREDERICK BREWINGTON (New York): Bishop, Fred Brewington. New York Annual Conference, African American, older adult, lay. I rise because while this petition did pass, and was—

BISHOP SCHOL: Please make your amendment.

BREWINGTON: Surely. My amendment is with regard to subparagraph 2. At the end of the first sentence to include these words: "The General Council on Finance and Administration shall include the costs of such bishops when recommending a quadrennial budget as provided by and required in paragraph 818."

Further, in subparagraph (2)(b), that after—and this would be in the first full sentence as provided—that after the words, "However, the salary and" to include the word "other." So it would read, "The salary and other expenses." That sentence would continue by saying: "of such additional bishops," adding the word "as" calculated, adding the word "by" the General Council on Finance and Administration, and then striking "pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 818 (the Episcopal Fund)."

And then, one final amendment, reading on: "shall be apportioned to the annual conferences of such jurisdiction," and then adding the following sentence: "Any jurisdiction seeking any bishops over the base number provided in subparagraph a) shall be able to demonstrate their ability to fund any additional bishops by providing a surety to the General Council on Finance and Administration that they are sufficiently capable to meet the full funding of the additional bishops for the coming quadrennium. The General Council on Finance and Administration will establish the base cost for the funding of an office of episcopal leader, which shall be used by any jurisdiction seeking to fund a number of bishops over the base number of five." And those would be the amendments. If I have a second, I will speak to it, Bishop.

BISHOP SCHOL: Is there a second? There is a second. Would you please hold before you speak to it? We do have a point of order. I want to go to Ian Urriola, mic. no. 3. Yes, and if Mr. Brewington—Delegate Brewington—if you would bring your amendment now to the desk, that would be very helpful. I'm now going to go to Delegate Ian.

IAN URRIOLA (Upper New York): Bishop, my name is Ian Carlos Urriola. I am a LatinX, lay, young adult delegate from the Upper New York Annual Conference. My point of order is that we have arrived to an Order of the Day for the printing—the deadline for printing materials in the *DCA*, and we have not yet received the list from the Connor and Maggie, and I would hope that we could receive the list of nominees that our Division on Ministries with Young People co-chairs have labored so hard to provide and give to the body for the General Conference, so that the General Conference can see the names and have it for twenty-four hours before we elect the Commission on the General Conference.

BISHOP SCHOL: We're just going to check to make sure that the financial items are also—if they're due at 5:00 today. If they are, we're going to need to extend our time for these particular motions.

(pause)

While we're looking for that, I want to go—

URRIOLA: In the event that we have to get the financial items in, Bishop, will the General Conference delegates be able to still vote on the slate—the nominees—the five nominees that they said they would have for us, even if the body doesn't have it for twenty-four hours before elections?

BISHOP SCHOL: It would be my goal to make sure that everything we need to complete by today to go into the *DCA*, we'll complete today. So that would include addressing the matter that you brought before us.

URRIOLA: Thank you, Bishop.

BISHOP SCHOL: While we're waiting for that, I think I will go back and address the youth piece. I've been asked to share with you. This is what the Judicial Council ruled: if there is no youth representation among the members of the Commission on the General Conference, the General Conference is required to identify, nominate, and elect at least one youth who meets the qualification set forth in 511. The key words in the declaratory decision is that the General Conference elect at least one youth who meets qualification set forth in paragraph 511. The chair will now read paragraph 511(1)(b) from *The Book of Discipline*. That paragraph reads—

URRIOLA: Can you read paragraph 511(1)(b), Bishop?

BISHOP SCHOL: I'm reading (1)(b) at this moment. But if you've got (1)(a) and you want to read that, we'll take that. But let me just finish here. "Members shall be nominated from the elected delegates of the General Conference."

Now, why don't you read (1)(a) so that we will have that as well.

URRIOLA: (1)(a) says that there must be one youth, and (1)(a) is the condition precedent of (1)(b). So if we can't nominate from the elected delegates to the General Conference, those refer to the Council of Bishops nominees. The General Conference may elect any qualified professing member who is a youth.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, so the challenge is that the Judicial Council ruling says that we must also 511(1)(b).

URRIOLA: No the Judicial Council decision doesn't say anything about (1)(b). It just says we have to follow 511(1).

BISHOP SCHOL: Yes, OK. You're correct. But, are you saying we should ignore five eleven one B?

URRIOLA: I'm saying that 511(1)(b) doesn't specify that the people nominated by delegates from the General Conference *have to be* delegates to General Conference. That qualifier of delegates is only applied to the nominees that come from the Council of Bishops.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, let me read the digest from the Judicial Council ruling, "if there is no youth representation among the members of the Commission on the General Conference, the General Conference is required to identify, nominate, and elect at least one youth who meets the qualification set forth in 511." 511 includes both (1)(a) and (1)(b).

URRIOLA: Right. And 511(1) says that there has to be a youth, and paragraph—I believe it's 256 or 263—identifies, lays out what a youth is in this United Methodist Church. Connor and Maggie have names of five youth to bring to this body because we are blessed with an abundance of youth leadership in this denomination, and our young people know how to find each other.

BISHOP SCHOL: We'll move forward with the election.

URRIOLA: With or without Connor and Maggie's nominations?

BISHOP SCHOL: Well, we've already elected, so what I am referring to is, we'll look at the additional nominations.

URRIOLA: Connor and Maggie will get to deliver the names to the body?

BISHOP SCHOL: If there is anybody that wants to challenge that, we can take that challenge.

URRIOLA: Happy to have them challenge it.

(laughter)

BISHOP SCHOL: OK, please. I would ask the delegate to not engage in the banter back and forth.

URRIOLA: My apologies, Bishop.

BISHOP SCHOL: That's OK. That's OK. We are going to go back to where we were. Your point of order has been made. I've given a ruling on what we are going to do. And now we'll—see where we are—We are looking at what needs to be done by 5:00 today. Time is ticking. First of all, it's pretty clear we are passed 5:00, so is there a motion to extend the time for the *DCA* and the material to go in the *DCA*.

EFFIE MCAVOY MCCLAIN (New England): So moved.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, please go to a microphone. I did hear a voice over here. Yes, we will go to mic... What number is that?

MCAVOY MCCLAIN: [Mic.] 1

BISHOP SCHOL: No. 1. Please make your motion.

MCAVOY MCCLAIN: Effie McAvoy, she/her, New England, Black, adult. I move that we extend the time of deadline for the *DCA* to 6:00 P.M., today only, for today is Tuesday of our Lord and Savior, something, something, something, April...

BISHOP SCHOL: So, you moved it to 6:00?

MCAVOY MCCLAIN: Yes sir.

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you very much. Is there a second? It's been moved and seconded. We're going to go to our secretary.

GRAVES: Thank you, Bishop. I have consulted with the editor of the *DCA*, and we will be able to care for the four items and the additional names, if that is where we move, as long as we are completed with our business, and you don't make them terribly long because they have to be translated into French, Kiswahili, and Portuguese before we can print. So please remember it is not a simple process, and we can't keep them up all night and still expect them to work tomorrow. So we thank you for your understanding. We will be able to do that until 6:30.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, I think that takes care of the motion, so we will be able to continue to do our work. Where we're going to go now is back to delegate Brewington's amendment—that's what we were working on before we got the point of order. And I believe we do have that in print here. Is that correct?

BREWINGTON: Yes, moved and seconded.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. Now if you could, and we're going to give you the opportunity to speak to it. But if could just say a word of what you are trying to do and why. That would be really helpful, I think, for the delegates to understand that ahead.

BREWINGTON: Thank you, Bishop. Yes, the reason this is being offered is, although the—by the way I chair the Judicial Study Committee, the Jurisdictional Study Committee. The reason this is being offered, although the petition did pass, there were questions that were raised by GCFA. And we thought, and we sat down and met with them. Before the discussion with GCFA could be brought to the body, the petition passed. However, this is a matter of integrity. After negotiating with GCFA and addressing their real concerns, these were the amendments that were to be made. So they are being brought—even though we could very easily go and vote on the petition as is, a matter of integrity we came to an agreement and we thought that it was appropriate that we honor that agreement by bringing it to the full body to respond to the issues that GCFA raised.

BISHOP SCHOL: OK. Thank you very much. Would it be fair to say that you've had a conversation with GCFA, and this is critical mechanisms to help this legislation move forward?

BREWINGTON: Yes, and more so, Bishop, may I just add one sentence. It is also will allay concerns that they have with regard to budgeting and of progress in the next quadrennial.

BISHOP SCHOL: Let me ask you this, does it change any of the intent of that original legislation?

BREWINGTON: It does not. As a matter of fact, it makes it stronger.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you very much. So what you've heard is that this is an amendment that puts in mechanisms to make sure that this legislation can move forward in a way that can be managed by GCFA and jurisdictions as they work on this and is really necessary to help this legislation to move forward.

BREWINGTON: That is correct.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. Are we ready to vote? All right. Do we need to hear the amendment again? It's a long amendment. I think we've kind of given the brief synopsis. I think we are all together on this. I don't see anybody in the pool that would like to speak, so we will go to the vote. We pull up the vote. All of those who would approve the amendment, signify by selecting number *one (1)* for yes, number *two (2)* for no. Please vote now.

(pause)

BISHOP SCHOL: Is there anyone who would still like to vote? Not hearing anyone, we'll now go to that results.

You have voted 660 yes; 51 no. It passes.

[Yes, 660; No, 51]

We're now on the main motion as amended. Are you ready to vote? Not seeing anyone that wants to speak. We'll now go to voting.

We're voting on 547 as amended. Bring up the poll—the voting. All those who would support please select no. *one (1)* for yes, no. *two (2)* for no. Please vote now.

(*pause*)

Is there anyone that would still like to vote? I do not see anyone. Please bring up the results.

You have voted 666. Ooh that's biblical. I don't know.

(*laughter*)

666 yes; 43 no. Let's quickly move on to the next piece.

(*laughter*)

It passes.

[*Yes, 666; No, 43*]

I'm actually going to go, I believe, to mic. no. 2. This needs to be done from the floor. Alex Shanks. This again has financial implications. Alex Shanks.

SHANKS: Yes, Bishop. This is Alex Shanks, a clergy delegate from the Florida Conference. Adult, White, male, and this is Calendar Item 546 found on p. 2240. It was not supported in the committee, so a group of delegates brought it to the floor, and the purpose of us bringing it to the floor is to amend by substitution. So if that's in order, Bishop, I'd like to amend by substitution.

BISHOP SCHOL: Yes, it's been properly brought to the floor and is amendable by substitution. Just to remind you that a substitute replaces what was already voted on in the committee. And if you would read that substitution at this time.

SHANKS: So the substitution would retain paragraph 404.1 as it is currently printed in the *Discipline*, and it would replace paragraph 404.2 with the following language:

"In the jurisdictions the number of bishops shall be determined on the basis of missional reasons as approved by the General Conference on recommendation of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy. Before recommending the number of episcopal areas the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy shall

A. Consider these criteria in the following order of priority:

1. The number of charge conferences and number of active clergy in episcopal areas;
2. The geographic size of episcopal areas; and
3. The overall church membership in the annual conferences in the episcopal areas.

B. Conduct an analysis of the contest and missional potential of changes in episcopal areas.

C. Analyze the capacity of the Episcopal Fund to determine the number of bishops that can be funded.

The following groups shall be consulted during this analysis of the Episcopal Fund: the Executive Committee of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, the officers of the Council of Bishops, and the officers of the General Council on Finance and Administration."

This petition is effective immediately.

BISHOP SCHOL: Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, that's been properly moved and seconded. Before you speak to it, we do have a point of—no actually we're OK. I thought it was a point of order. We don't have a point of order. You may now speak to it.

Can you explain just briefly what it is you're trying to do and why. That's a long substitute, and please bring that up right after you speak.

SHANKS: Thank you, Bishop. The purpose of this amendment by substitution is to create parity between the process of determining the number of bishops in the jurisdictions with the current process in the central conferences.

Right now 404.2 is based on a formula related to the professing members and the current formula allows for more bishops than we can afford in our Episcopal Fund. We were told by the General Council on Finance and Administration that if we elect the number of bishops the current formula allows we will run out of money in the Episcopal Fund. We support the Jurisdictional Study Committee, but that is not effective until the next quadrennium. This becomes effective immediately. It places the—into the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy the role of looking at the missional needs, the size and scope of the annual conferences, and analyzing the Episcopal Fund. Every annual conference in the jurisdiction has a representative on this committee. It encourages us to look at financial sustainability and to focus on our missional needs. And so I encourage the delegates to allow for this amendment by substitution so that in the next quadrennium we can determine a number of bishops that we can afford and that would meet the missional needs of each of our jurisdictions. Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right thank you. Again we are just looking at should we substitute this amendment for what was already printed. That is a speech for. Not see anybody that wants to speak against. The pool is open.

Going to go to Jasper Peters for a speech for. Mic. no. 2.

JASPER PETERS (Rocky Mountain): Thank you, Bishop. My name is Jasper Peters. I am Black; I'm male; I am a standard issue adult clergyperson from the Mountain Sky Annual Conference. I am also the vice-chair of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, and I would support this amendment. We are thankful of the work of this study commission—committee. We also recognize the renewed spirit of collaborative ministry that has been present at this General Conference, and we give thanks to the body and to God. We recognize that this ministry is shared and so are our burdens and especially so is our mission. And we have the opportunity to be missional in our thinking and our actions at this time. We recognize that in the United States we need to adjust, and we likely need to reduce. We currently have forty active bishops across our jurisdictions. We have been able to engage in vibrant discussion—and its ongoing discussion—with our partners across the jurisdictions. We recognize that the current jurisdictional—the needs across our jurisdictions would require thirty-six bishops. This means that between us we will experience reduction. It means that we may need to share bishops, meaning asking a bishop to move from one jurisdiction to perhaps serve in another. We recognize we are in uncharted territory. But this amendment allows us to be missional in our process and conversation and not only led by the figures that are before us. This allows us to speak directly to our missional needs so that we can consider the whole needs of the body and the church. We would appreciate you support.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right we've had two speeches for. There is a point of inquiry. I'm going to go to Olandor Boyce at mic. no. 1 for his question of inquiry.

BISHOP SCHOL: If this is related to the question you asked earlier about Judicial Council ruling, I still have that. We're going to come to you. OK great. We're going to get to you. So we'll all keep working together and keep moving forward.

All right. We've had two speeches for, and there is a speech against. Jorge Lockwood, if you would please go to mic. no. 3.

(pause)

JORGE LOCKWARD (New York): Thank you, Bishop. Jorge Lockward, cisgender male, New York Annual Conference, lay. Friends, we just passed legislation overwhelmingly that, in effect, says exactly the opposite of what this amendment by substitution is presenting to us. To be honest, I find it a bit underhanded that the legislative process is legally subverted in this way. We are tired, and for some of us, it took us a while to see how what is presented basically denies what we just passed overwhelmingly. Now I'm going to speak to the substance of the matter. If all goes well, there may be a U.S. region. This is a bird that we have wanted to see fly for a very, very long time. That bird—it's going to have to make tough decisions. But to clip the wings of that bird now by changing the number of bishops that the jurisdictions have precludes the work that that potential region—if all goes well—will have to do. So, I believe it's best to not clip the wings of that bird, to let it fly at the level that we are at now with the bishops that we have at this moment, and let them discern that on their own instead of asking this global body to do that work.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you very much. I think I want to just get a clarification, and maybe delegate Brewington can help us with this. In terms of the legislation that you were presenting, when does that take effect?

BREWINGTON: Bishop, I can answer that, but it may take some explanation after I answer it.

BISHOP SCHOL: Just give us the answer first, and then we'll see if we need to go further.

BREWINGTON: Next quadrennium.

BISHOP SCHOL: Excuse me.

BREWINGTON: Next quadrennium.

BISHOP SCHOL: Next quadrennium. So the issue here for all of us is that the legislation that's just been referred to as a mechanism to help us address these issues is being undermined. The legislation that is being spoken of doesn't begin until next quadrennium. What delegate Shanks is put forth is, what do we do between now and the next quadrennium? So they are not in competition with each other. One is addressing what we do now; the other one cannot be implemented until next quadrennium. Would that be correct? Delegate Brewington?

BREWINGTON: That is accurate to a degree.

BISHOP SCHOL: OK. To a degree? I forgot, we have a lawyer here. OK.

(laughter)

Why don't you tell us what you mean by "to a degree"?

BREWINGTON: Provisions have been made in the work of the Jurisdictional Study Committee during that liminal time to look at where we were and have been between the time period starting in 2016.

BISHOP SCHOL: Could you repeat that again?

(laughter)

BREWINGTON: Sure. In—

BISHOP SCHOL: Just move a little closer to the microphone.

BREWINGTON: Surely. The time period as to where we would be, would be to allow us to remain where we are, as we were in 2016.

BISHOP SCHOL: OK. Thank you very much. We've had two speeches for the substitution, one speech against. We have a point of inquiry, so we will take the point of inquiry. First we'll go to Katie Dawson, mic. no. 5, then we'll go to Robert Zilhaver, mic. no. 1.

KATIE DAWSON (Iowa): Katie Dawson, White, female clergy from Iowa. My question was really what we've been talking about and trying to figure out if one negates the other. And my question is, is there a specific time within this new substitute at which this language expires, so that the other language we have passed is implemented?

BISHOP SCHOL: Delegate Shanks, if you would respond to that, that would be helpful. Then we're going go to Rev. Zilhaver, on mic. no. 1, for a point of inquiry.

SHANKS: Thank you, Bishop. There is not a date of expiration, but we would take this up at the next General Conference, and so the Jurisdictional Study Committee work that we've already passed is fully in order. We are not trying to be in conflict with that work, we're simply trying to solve the current problem related to the election of bishops at the next Jurisdictional Conference.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you very much. And we're going to go to delegate Zilhaver, and then we're going to Eric Lee, mic. no. 5.

ROBERT ZILHAVER (Western Pennsylvania): Hello, Robert Zilhaver, clergy, White, male, Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference. My question is, does paragraph no. 404 apply to both the jurisdictional study and the petition that is now before us? Are those the same paragraphs?

BISHOP SCHOL: We'll first go to delegate Brewington, and then we'll go to delegate Shanks for a response.

(pause)

BREWINGTON: Yes.

(laughter)

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you.

SHANKS: Yes.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. There we go.

ZILHAVER: So my—does that mean—

BISHOP SCHOL: You get one crack at it, but—ask your question. Give us a quick—

ZILHAVER: Parliamentarily, if a motion that covers the same paragraph is voted on later, does it negate the first? In other words, if we vote on a paragraph 404 in this amendment, does it negate the action we took earlier on the jurisdictional.

(pause)

BISHOP SCHOL: Yes, but let us hear from both delegate Brewington and Shanks again on their responses to that. Delegate Shanks first.

SHANKS: Thank you, Bishop, that is not the intent of this substitute amendment, and I would trust our Committee on Editorial Revision to make sure that we don't negate the work of the Jurisdictional Study Committee. We're trying to solve an immediate concern so that we can move forward. We're not trying to change the intent of what the body just passed.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. Thank you. Mic. no. 3.

BREWINGTON: Bishop, this is one of five petitions brought by the Jurisdictional Study Committee, and while this particular one does not address the gap we're actually talking about, I believe that one of the other three that have passed does.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. Thank you very much. We're now going to go to mic. no. 5, Eric Lee, to close debate.

ERIC LEE (North Georgia): Bishop, is mic. 6 OK?

BISHOP SCHOL: That's fine.

LEE: Thank you. Eric Lee, different White man from North Georgia, clergy, he/his pronouns, adult, and I move that we end debate.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. This has been moved. Is there a second?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Second.

BISHOP SCHOL: It's not debatable. We'll go to the vote. If you would like to close debate, you'll select no. *one (1)*; if you'd like to continue the debate, you'll select no. *two (2)*. Please vote now.

All right. Is there anyone that would still like to vote? All right. I do not see anyone. There's a hand raised. Someone still wants to vote. All right. Has everyone voted who would like to vote? Still a hand here.

All right, we'll go to the results. You have 675 yes, 38 no. It meets the two-thirds requirement. We've closed the debate.

[Yes, 675; No, 38]

BISHOP SCHOL: We go to the amendment. Is there anyone who would like to hear the amendment read?

All right, we'll turn to the secretary to please read the amendment.

GRAVES: Retain paragraph 404.1 as printed in the *Discipline*. Replace current 404.2 with these new provisions: Point two, in the Jurisdictions, the number of bishops shall be determined on the basis of missional reasons as approved by the General Conference on recommendation of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy. Before recommending the number of episcopal areas, the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy shall, A—consider these criteria in the following order of priority: One, the number of charge conferences and the number of active clergy in episcopal areas; two, the geographic size of episcopal areas; three, the overall church membership in the annual conferences in the episcopal areas. B—conduct an analysis of the context and missional potential of changes in episcopal areas. C—analyze the capacity of the Episcopal Fund to determine the number of bishops that can be funded. The following groups shall be consulted during this analysis of the Episcopal Fund: the Executive Committee of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, the officers of the Council of Bishops, and the officers of the General Council on Finance and Administration. This petition is effective immediately.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you. We go right to the vote. This is—the vote on this is do you want to adopt this as the substitute? That's what we are voting on. Do you want to adopt this as the substitute? That would negate the original legislation and would be the substitute that would be before us. If you would like to adopt this as the substitute, please select *one (1)* for yes and *two (2)* for no. Please vote now.

(pause)

Is there anyone that would still like to vote? I do not see or hear anyone. We'll now go to the results. You have voted 545 yes, 170 no. It passes.

[Yes, 545; No, 170]

It is now the main motion before us. Ready to go to a vote on the main motion. I do not see anyone that wants to discuss. We'll now go to the vote. If you vote yes, no. *one (1)*, that will adopt this as the motion. No would not adopt. The vote is before us. Please select no. *one (1)* for yes, no. *two (2)* for no. Please vote now.

(pause)

Is there anyone that would still like to vote? I did not see anyone. We'll now go to the result. You voted 605 yes, 95 no. You have adopted the motion. Thank you very much.

[Yes, 605; No, 95]

Let me just bring you up to date where we are. We have several items that are supposed to be at 5:55, and we still have two calendar items that are financial in nature. We also have the youth report and a motion coming about electing additional youth delegates for the commission and so those things are yet still to be done. And we also have a Judicial Council question. So we have essentially four items that are critical for us to finish before we conclude today to be able to be included in the *Daily Advocate* for tomorrow for the actions or for the budgeting. We would need a motion to extend our session to be able to take those. If not, we will have to close the session in approximately seven minutes.

BETHANY AMEY (Greater New Jersey): So moved.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. If the person who said, "So moved," would go to the microphone. I did hear, over here on my left. Is there anyone at the microphone, it's hard for me to see. Mic. no. 5.

AMEY: Bethany Amey, Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. Laity, Korean, woman, adult, she/her/hers. So moved until finished.

BISHOP SCHOL: Until finished.

(laughter)

What don't you say, maybe the best way to say that—

AMEY: Help me out.

BISHOP SCHOL: Yes, I'd be glad to.

AMEY: Let's do this together.

(laughter)

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. So here's what I need you to do.

AMEY: OK.

BISHOP SCHOL: Move to continue the session until 6:30. We'll try to finish before then.

AMEY: I rise to make a motion to extend our time until 6:30.

BISHOP SCHOL: Actually 6:45. I'm sorry.

(laughter)

You said we were going to work together. Come on!

AMEY: Yeah, come on! All right, let me try again. I make a motion to move and extend our time until 6:45 P.M. to finish our business.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. Is there a second?

Is there anybody opposed?

I do not hear anybody oppose so we will continue till 6:45 to try and complete our business. Now, let me just say—if we work together, we can do this. So there are three items before us that we must complete. And so the first one is Bishop Harald Rückert, establishment of the Central Conference Higher Education Fund. Bishop Rückert?

And after him, we're going to go to Amy Lippoldt.

He's here? Good. And then we're going to go to our youth delegates, Connor and Maggie.

(pause)

Please. Quickly, please.

(laughter)

BISHOP HARALD RÜCKERT: Harald Rückert. Still Germany Central Conference, still. Some refer to me as "promise keeper". I promised to come back; here I am.

BISHOP SCHOL: Quickly, please!

(laughter)

BISHOP RÜCKERT: It is about Item 21, Petition 20209, p. 1993, *DCA*. It is about establishing of a Higher Education Fund. This issue has a long tradition, and petition is about inserting a new paragraph following paragraph 817 to create a Central Conference Higher Education Fund. You see the petition before you. The only amendment that comes from Standing Committee is we altered the actual quadrennium, and it is a fund that should be funded with \$5 million. We just decided that this would be good to do so, but the Standing Committee is not able to decide on the finances. So we recommend this to be of, again, reviewed by GCFA and GBHEM.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, so what is before us must be reviewed by GCFA. Is that correct?

BISHOP RÜCKERT: At least what is in terms of finances, yeah.

BISHOP SCHOL: OK, in terms of finances. So we are on *DCA* 1993, Calendar Item 21, Petition 20209. That is before you. The pool is open. I do not see anyone in the pool. All right, I have a point of order. Mic. no. 1, Becca Girrell.

BECCA GIRRELL (New England): Becca Girrell, clergy, New England Annual Conference, she/her/hers, queer, White, adult. I am very sorry to do this. My point of order is in reference to the previous question and a violation of Rule 7. The pool was never opened so that we could speak for or against the previous question. The keypads did not register any votes and did not allow me to raise

that point of order until this moment. We are in violation of lines 725 and following, p. 2046 of the *ADCA*: “No report shall be adopted without opportunity having been given for at least two speeches for and two against.”

(*pause*)

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you very much for calling that to our attention. The chair was not aware that the pool was not open. I apologize. At this point we have a matter before us on the floor. So we will work through the items before us and then come back to that point of order.

All right, the pool is open we have a speech for. Gomer Chamusa, mic. no. 2.

GOMER CHAMUSA (South Congo): *Merci*, Bishop.

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you. Headphones, please.

CHAMUSA: Gomer Chamusa, delegate.

BISHOP SCHOL: Could you wait one second until we have translation?

CHAMUSA: (*speaking French*)

BISHOP SCHOL: Excuse me, I’m not hearing translation. Is anyone hearing translation?

CHAMUSA: (*simultaneous interpretation from French*) I was saying, Gomer Chamusa lay delegate from South Congo Annual Conference. I have asked to speak in order to support this petition that gives the higher education structures of the central conferences the funds necessary.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right thank you very much. That is a speech for.

I see another speech for; I do not see any speeches against. We’ll go to delegate Martins. Mic. no. 5.

ALCIDES MARTINS (Eastern Angola): (*simultaneous interpretation from Portuguese*) Alcides Martins, Black, from the Annual Conference of the Eastern Angola. I want to present my speech in favor of this fund because for us, especially the central conferences, we’ve been debating the issue with lack of resources for higher education.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. Thank you very much. That’s two speeches for. I do see a speech against. Ken Ow, mic. no. 6.

KEN OW (Baltimore-Washington): Ken Ow, laity, Baltimore-Washington. The Central Conference Higher Education Fund is being proposed as a new line item in the World Service Fund. GCFA is in no way arguing that the need for the fund and those scholarships aren’t there. They are. We’re called to share the Holy Spirit through education. In our current proposed budget, we are spending almost 28 percent on education already the largest of all categories, including discipleship and social justice. World Service funding is already significantly reduced by 49 percent in the proposed budget. Agency funding within the World Service Fund such as the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry is being reduced by 53 percent. If you’re going to add this new item, new separate line item, it will further decrease the funding for existing world service ministries. Or at least will increase the bottom line of our quadrennial budget by adding another \$5 million. That additional increase would be funded via apportionments, of course, to local churches—which we’re trying to avoid, right? And annual conferences who are already facing financial difficulties. So as an alternative option to impact the general church budget, allow the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry on their own to fund and care for this ministry.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right thank you very much. That’s a speech against. We’ve had two speeches for and one speech against. There are three people in the pool—they all are mic. no. 2. I’m going to invite you to go to mic. no. 2 in this order. Molly McEntire, Christine Dodson, Andy Bryan. All at mic. no. 2. The first two persons have points of inquiry, and the third is a motion to close debate.

MOLLY MCENTIRE (Florida): Hi, Bishop. Molly McEntire from the Florida Conference. Laity, adult. So I’m just wondering, where is this money coming from?

BISHOP SCHOL: Bishop?

BISHOP Rückert: May I invite Greg Bergquist to speak on that? He also had provided some information to us at a Standing Committee.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, we’ll invite the general secretary. While he’s coming to the microphone, we also have another point of inquiry that might be the same, but let’s just check to be sure. Christine Dodson?

CHRISTINE DODSON (North Carolina): Thank you. Christine Dodson, North Carolina Annual Conference. White, female, lay, adult. And I had a similar question about the source of the funding for this. If this was intended to come from the reserves that are listed in Report 4? Or I needed further clarification, also, on the bishop’s notice that this would go to GCFA and the General Board of Higher Education. Was that a referral to them or was this to be passed and then they consider? I’m not clear on the process. Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: Ok. Anything with financial implications has to go to GCFA. So, if we did pass this it would still have to go to GCFA for review. Mic. no. 4 for the general secretary.

Greg Bergquist (California-Nevada, General Secretary of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry): Thank you, Bishop. Greg Bergquist, White male. It's good to be here again. So, I want to point out that this petition did not come from GBHEM, it came from the African Association of Methodists Institutions of Higher Education and was written back in 2019. So it is a request to create a new World Service Fund and it would be a fund similar to the Central Conference Theological Education Fund or even MEF or Black College Fund. So it's not included in the GBHEM budget. These funds are denominational funds that GBHEM didn't support administratively or operationally. So given the conversations that have happened so far this afternoon, I do think there would be budget impact that would need to be considered, and my understanding that that is referred to GCFA and then in consultation with Connectional Table. However, I am not a finance expert, and I think possibly, General Secretary Moses Kumar, could provide more direct information about that.

BISHOP SCHOL: We're very clear we would have to go to GCFA and GCFA would bring back any recommendation. We do have mic. no. 2. Andy Bryan to close debate.

ANDY BRYAN (Missouri): Andy Bryan, clergy, from Missouri Annual Conference, White male, adult, he/him pronouns. I move to close debate.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. Is there a second? All right, we go right to debate. It requires two-thirds vote. If we would put it up on this screen, the voting. All those who would close debate, select *one (1)* for yes; all those that want to continue, select *two (2)*, no. Please vote now.

(pause)

Is there anyone who would still like to vote? All right, if we would see the results. You have voted 670 yes, 26 no; you have closed debate.

[Yes, 670; No, 26]

We now go to the motion that is before us. If you would support—Yes, we'll go back to the bishop, Bishop Rückert.

Bishop Rückert: I just want to remind the body of the purpose for this fund. Four Methodist Higher Educational Associations in Central Conference represent ninety-six institutions striving to improve Methodist higher education. This is the purpose of this fund.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, thank you very much. We'll pull up the ballot on this screen. All those who would support, signify by selecting *one (1)*, yes; *two (2)*, no. Please vote now.

(pause)

Has everybody voted that would like to vote? All right, may we see the results? You have voted 483 yes, 219 no; you have supported the legislation. Thank you very much.

[Yes, 483; No, 219]

Bishop Rückert: See you tomorrow!

(laughter)

BISHOP SCHOL: If we can get through tonight, yes. All right. Friends, we've just have a couple of items left. We do have a point of order that we're going to also going to go back to, so please work with us. We just have a few minutes. Financial implications, Amy Lippoldt. If you would come, and this is resolving a discrepancy, I believe, and so listen very carefully.

AMY LIPPOLDT (Great Plains Conference): Thank you, Bishop. I'm Amy Lippoldt, clergy from the Great Plains Annual Conference, White American woman, adult.

I want to say thank you to the General Administration Legislative Committee for the great work they did. The officers I was able to work with, we did good and careful work, and the petition that I bring to you today was the one procedural hiccup that we had in our work together. And I just want to apologize for having to take conference time to do it. It's Calendar Item No. 456, you will find it on p. 2178 of the *DCA*. It deals with Petition 20261, and what this petition tries to do is, comes from the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters to add a fourth representative from Africa to the Connectional Table. It's to align us with what we did yesterday, adding a new central conference in Africa. Currently each central conference gets one representative to the Connectional Table, and so when you add a central conference, you should add a representative. But yesterday, on the Consent Calendar, we passed a petition that also came from General Administration that conflicts with this petition. That petition on the Consent Calendar created a different formula for the Connectional Table that actually makes five representatives to the Connectional Table from Africa. We tried to reconcile this in committee and didn't ask the right people, and so we went ahead and passed this petition, not sure what to do. I have since asked the right people and what we need to do is not, is vote this petition down. So I come to you saying the committee supported this petition, and I ask you not to.

BISHOP SCHOL: And it's because of a technical matter that and to resolve that technical matter we would need to vote this down. Is that correct?

LIPPOLDT: That's correct.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, that is what is before us. If we would open the pool. I do not see anyone in the pool. Are you ready to vote? Yes. All right. If we'd put up on the screen the ballot. All those who would select, or all those who would vote in favor, please select *one (1)* for yes or *two (2)* for no. Please vote now.

(pause)

Is there anyone who would still like to vote? I do not see anyone.

If we may have the results now. You have voted 182 yes, 513 no. You have defeated it, and I think that we're now where we need to be. Thank you.

[Yes, 182; No, 513]

We're so close, friends. We had a point of order, and that moves us back to Item 546—Calendar Item 546 and Alex Shanks, and that is about the allocation of number of bishops. The pool was not open. I was not aware of that, I apologize. Our rules state that the pool must be open before a vote can be taken. We'll go back to that item, and we will open the pool now. Please open the pool. All right, we'll go to mic. no. 1. We have an amendment. Mic. no. 1, Bonnie Marden.

BONNIE MARDEN (New England): Bonnie Marden, lay delegate from the New England Annual Conference. So grateful for the collaborative work that we are engaging in to resolve the dynamics—

BISHOP SCHOL: What is your amendment?

MARDEN: I move that there be an addition to Alex Shanks' motion—proposal—that allocates a minimum of five bishops per jurisdiction, and the rest of his material would stand as it is.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, is there a second? All right, that's properly moved and seconded.

MARDEN: I would speak to it in terms of affirmation of the collaborative work that we are doing together and to acknowledge that the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy is a brave, courageous group of strangers who are looking to work together on very important matters, and to avoid the possibility that we slide into jurisdictional competition. I believe this setting a minimum and then allocating a missional basis would set us on a better playing field and a safer space to do what is best for all the jurisdictions.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, so your amendment would give five bishops per jurisdiction as a minimum. Is that correct?

MARDEN: That is correct.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. We've had a speech for the amendment. We are on the amendment, a pool has been cleared. Is there anyone that wants to speak to the amendment? All right. I do not see anyone who wants to speak against; I don't see anyone who would speak for. All right. We do have somebody who would like to speak for, and that is mic. no. 2. Yes, that is TK Kufarimai.

TK KUFARIMAI (North Alabama): TK Kufarimai, North Alabama Annual Conference. Bishop, if we are saying we are going to look at the missional needs, and we set minimums, are we not binding ourselves to just do minimums without looking at missional needs? I think the missional needs, in the field, should determine what we need, rather than determine what we need before we know what we need. Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, we'll take that as a rhetorical question, a speech for. We do not have any speeches against, we had two speeches for. I have a parliamentary inquiry. Bill Brownson, mic. no. 3.

BILL BROWNSON (West Ohio): Thank you. Bill Brownson, lay, West Ohio Conference, adult, male. I would like the house to know how many bishops that would change from the thirty-two that's been discussed most of today, and by how much any of those difference in the number of bishops would cost.

BISHOP SCHOL: Is there someone who can answer that question? Does not appear to. I think the challenge is that it sets the minimum, five in each jurisdiction—that would be twenty-five— budgeted for thirty-two, that would leave seven, if that's what's passed in the budget to be dispersed among the jurisdictions. All right. I have a motion to close debate. We do not have anybody speaking against. We'll go to Rommel Dela Cruz, mic. no. 6. Mic. no. 6.

ROMMEL DELA CRUZ (Tarlac Philippines): (*simultaneous interpretation from Tagalog*) Rommel Dela Cruz, pastor. I am suggesting to end the debate.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, that's to close debate, a motion to close debate. Is there a second? All right, that is properly before us. Just so that you know, since that motion was made, there are two people that entered to speak against, there is an other parliamentary question, or matter. There's two points of information. We are in order to move to close debate. We'll go to the—

there we are. All those who would like to close debate, please select *one (1)*; those who do not, please select *two (2)*. Please vote now.

(*pause*)

Has everybody voted that would like to vote? We'll see the results. 672, yes; 27, no. You have closed debate, we now go to the amendment.

[Yes, 672; No, 27]

The amendment is a minimum of five bishops in each jurisdiction. All of those who would support the amendment, please select *one (1)* for yes; all those opposed, please select *two (2)* for no.

(*pause*)

You have a couple of flags in the back. Please keep your flags up. Thank you.

(*pause*)

All right, I do not see any flags up. Is everybody voted who would like to vote? All right, may we see the results. You voted 407 yes, 297 no. It passes.

[Yes, 407; No, 297]

We're back now on the main motion, we've not had any speakers for or against. The pool is now open.

(*pause*)

I do not see anybody in the pool.

(*pause*)

I see a delegate Ian, mic. no. 5, other parliamentary.

IAN URRIOLA (Upper New York): Bishop, Ian Urriola, laity, Latinx, male, Upper New York. I move that we extend the *DCA* deadline to 6:45.

BISHOP SCHOL: Is there a second? It's been moved and seconded. Is there anybody opposed to extending the 6:45? Yes, I did hear yes. So we will go to the voting machine if we put up the ballot. Requires a two-thirds vote. Please put up the ballot. There we are. Those who would be willing to extend to 6:45, please select *one (1)* for yes; those opposed, please select *two (2)* for no. Please vote now.

(*pause*)

All right, let us see the results. You voted 539 yes, 163 no. we've extended to 6:45.

[Yes, 539; No, 163]

We're now on the motion that is before us. If we would open the poll for the motion as amended. And actually, we voted to go to a vote, so there is no discussion. If we would put up the ballot. All those who would support the motion, please select *one (1)* for yes, *two (2)* for no. Please vote now.

(*pause*)

Is there anyone that would still like to vote? Seeing none. If we would have the results. You voted 557 yes, 119 no. You have passed the motion.

[Yes, 557; No, 119]

Now we're going to go to the matter about youth delegates for the Commission on the General Conference. So I'd just like to say this ahead, we have a conflicting piece in *The Book of Discipline*. We've heard different interpretations. We've had a Judicial Council ruling that essentially says that the paragraph needs to be followed. We're going to move forward with the nominations. If there is somebody who wants to question that, I think the best option would be to refer it back to the Judicial Council through a declaratory decision. So we will move forward with the motion to open the nominations, and we will work through that, and we'll see where we are.

PRUSHA: Thank you, Bishop. Connor Prusha, lay delegate from the East Ohio Conference. Bishop, I move to reopen nominations to the Commission on the General Conference to allow for the nomination of the following six youth. May I read the names?

BISHOP SCHOL: Yes, but first we need to open the nominations, then you can make the nominations. This is non-debatable. It's a simple majority. Is there a second to open? There is a second. So we will go right to the vote. We are opening the nominations for the General Commission on General Conference. If we would put the ballot on the screen, and this is only for youth positions. Waiting for the ballot. It takes them a little bit to prepare the ballot. All right, all of those who would be willing to reopen the nominations to make youth a nominations, please select *one (1)* for yes; those opposed, please select *two (2)* for no. You may vote now.

Has everyone voted that would like to vote? I do not see any additional time. If we would see the results.

Six—*(laughs)* Hey, please.

(laughter)

666, yes; 32, no. It passes.

[Yes, 666; No, 32]

May we read the nominations for youth delegates.

PRUSHA: Landon Balmos-Ruddock from the West Ohio Conference

TAYLOR: Dave Uriel Rombaoa from Central Luzon Philippines Annual Conference

PRUSHA: Kaneza Chanelle from the Brundi Annual Confernce

TAYLOR: Konrad Westad from the Norway Annual Conference

PRUSHA: Anastasia Mykhtoniuk a youth from Ukraine-Moldova Provisional Annual Conference

TAYLOR: And Kenani Kaira from the Zambia Annual Conference

BISHOP SCHOL: All right, that is six nomination for youth delegates. Are there any nominations from the floor?

Please clear the queue. The poll—I'm sorry—please clear the poll. Let's see if there are any nominations from the floor. All right, I do not see anyone wishing to make an additional nomination, but I do see that there are close debate and I also see other parliamentary matters. My hunch is that those are questions for the judicial council. So what we're going to do is first take the vote on the nominees. Then we will go to those other parliamentary matters. OK.

I'm sorry we're going to be voting on this tomorrow. So nominations are closed; these will be nominees that will be presented tomorrow for your vote and now we'll go to questions of parliamentary.

TONYA MURPHY (North Georgia): Bishop?

BISHOP SCHOL: Yes, it's best to go in through the poll.

MURPHY: Yes sir, I tried.

BISHOP SCHOL: Is this a point of order?

MURPHY: No sir, it's a nomination from the floor.

BISHOP SCHOL: Oh I'm sorry. OK, please you may make that.

MURPHY: Tonya Murphy, African American, female, adult, layperson, she/her, North Georgia Conference.

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you very much, if you would bring that to the secretary.

MURPHY: That's *my* name.

(laughter)

I'm not a youth, not anymore.

BISHOP SCHOL: Well, you look so young. I thought you were nominating yourself. *(laughs)* So go ahead. I'm sorry. Please make the nomination.

MURPHY: I'd like to lift the name of Kaitlyn Coakely, youth, female, African American, North Georgia Conference.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right thank you if you would bring that to the secretary.

I do not see any other nominations. All right, I will like to go to Judith Osongo, mic. no. 4. Judith Osongo from East Congo. Mic. no. 4.

JUDITH OSONGO (East Congo): *(simultaneous interpretation from French)* Thank you very much, Bishop Judith Osongo. Young adult, East Congo. I had concern, but since you have given us the nomination, I would like to actually submit the name, to nominate a young—Amisi Ngongo of the Annual Conference of East Congo. Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: All right. We'll allow for grace, but the nominations now are closed. So this will be the last nomination that we take. We do have a—let me just scan here. Other parliamentary mater, Gomer Chamusa. Mic. no. 2. This needs to be something of a parliamentary nature. Mic. no. 2, South Congo.

CHAMUSA: Thank you, Bishop. Sorry maybe a mistake that I made. Thank you.

BISHOP SCHOL: Thank you very much. Friends, we have handled all of the business that we must take today, and you've done a great job. The question about—the Judicial Council question is not necessary to take today. I'll make sure that the presiders tomorrow are aware of delegate voices' request for a Judicial Council ruling.

Friends, you've done a great job. We are at 6:38; we have completed the business we needed to complete by 6:45. Let me just confer with my colleagues to see where we want to go at this time. Here we go. We're going to invite Bishop Bickerton and Bishop Malone to come forward as we announce those that are retiring and also pass the gavel as we close this evening.

Recognition of Retiring Bishops and Passing of the Gavel to Bishop Tracy Smith Malone

BISHOP THOMAS J. BICKERTON: Since we have not been together for some time, we thought it would be appropriate for us to acknowledge the Bishops who have retired since we were last together. It is such a privilege—I'm Tom Bickerton, by the way, the current president of the Council of Bishops for just another moment or two, and it has been my great pleasure over the last two years to work with all of these bishops behind me. I would testify to you that this is a group that's highly dedicated. They love the church. They love the annual conferences that they serve. And they love you. And I think it's appropriate for you to acknowledge the service of all of our bishops in this moment. Would you thank your bishops for their service?

(applause)

We want to especially acknowledge the bishops who have retired in 2020 and 2022, and I would just ask them to stand.

- Bishop Paul Leeland
- Bishop Mary Virginia Taylor
- Bishop Lawson Bryan
- Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe
- Bishop Bruce Ough
- Bishop Hope Morgan Ward
- Bishop Robert Hoshibata
- Bishop Jeremiah Park
- Bishop Sally Dyck
- Bishop Peggy Johnson
- Bishop Ciriaco Francisco
- Bishop Patrick Streiff
- Bishop Rodolfo Rudy Juan
- Bishop James E Swanson Sr.
- Bishop Sudarshana Devidhar, who passed away
- Bishop Grant Hagiya
- Bishop Michael McKee
- Bishop Elaine Stanovsky
- Bishop Gary Mueller
- Bishop Laurie Haller

These are the bishops that have retired from 2020 to 2022. Would you recognize them and thank them for their service?

(applause)

We also acknowledge with sadness that four former bishops have left our ranks to join the Global Methodist Church. Beyond that, we have bishops who are anticipated to retire in 2024 and early in 2025. I would ask them to stand.

- Bishop Minerva Carcaño
- Bishop Julius Trimble
- Bishop Gregory Vaughn Palmer
- Bishop John Schol
- Bishop William McAlilly
- Bishop James Nunn

Bishop Karen Oliveto
Bishop Jose Quipungo
Bishop Eben Nhiwatiwa
Bishop Gabriel Unda
Bishop Benjamin Boni
Bishop Christian Alsted
Bishop Joaquina Nhanala
Bishop Owen Kasap
Bishop John Wesley Yohanna
and Bishop Harald Rückert

Would you thank these bishops for their service to our church?

(applause)

We think that this is the first time the Council of Bishops have been able to pass the gavel in front of the entire General Conference. This is normally something that we've done internally in the Council, and so we are absolutely thrilled tonight to be able to walk through this liturgy in your presence. As I said earlier, it's been such a great delight for me to have the opportunity to serve as the president of the Council of Bishops for the last two years. I'm so pleased to be able to pass the gavel now, in your company, to Bishop Tracy S. Malone who will become the president of the Council of Bishops in just a few moments. It's been our pleasure to be able to serve you in the capacity with the current officers that we've had, and we look forward to continuing that service as we pass this gavel on to the next president of the Council of Bishops.

So in the book of Kings, we read the prophet Elijah's ministry. The mantle symbolic of submission to God fell upon the younger prophet Elisha, and the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha. My sister, Bishop Tracy S. Malone, I pass this gavel to you, indicating thereby that the responsibilities and the mission of the Council of Bishops will be caught up and carried on by you and the future bishops, and the spirit of today's Elijahs will rest upon today's Elishas.

(applause)

BISHOP TRACY S. MALONE: We, who come after you, we take up this mantle, and may we inherit a double share of the Spirit of God that is in you. Amen.

We invite you to join together,

ALL: We, therefore, prisoners in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We pledge to you our support and pray for God's grace, wisdom, and peace to abound in your presidency of the Council of Bishops. Amen.

BISHOP MALONE: It gives me great joy to receive this honor that has been bestowed upon me, and I consider it a privilege for my colleagues to have elected me as the president of the Council of Bishops. To God be the glory!

BISHOP BICKERTON: Amen.

(applause)

BISHOP MALONE: Friends, we know that we do not do this work alone, and at this time I have the privilege and honor of recognizing the officers that have been elected. Those with whom I get the privilege and the joy that we all get the privilege and the joy of serving alongside. And when I call your names, I invite you to come and stand with me here before the assembly.

Bishop Tom Bickerton, Immediate Past-President
Bishop Ruben Saenz, President Designate
Bishop Jonathan Holston, Secretary
Bishop Gregory Palmer, Executive Secretary
Bishops Rosemarie Wenner and Hope Morgan Ward, Co-Ecumenical Officers

We celebrate what God has done and what God is doing as we together as a council lead and help to shepherd this beautiful, beloved United Methodist Church into its next expression. God's vision for God's church. I invite you to join me as we unite our hearts in prayer.

Great is thy faithfulness, O God. There is no shadow of turning with thee. Thou changest not thy compassions; they fail not. As thou has been thou shall forever be. Great is thy faithfulness, morning by morning, new mercies we see. And we thank you, Lord, because all that we have needed, your hand continues to provide. Great is your faithfulness. Holy God, we honor you and give you all the praise and the glory and the honor for how your Holy Spirit continues to move all through your creation, through every generation, and through our beloved, beautifully diverse United Methodist Church. Your Spirit, O God, always renewing and transforming and working to bring light out of darkness, hope out of despair, and justice and peace out of ruin and chaos.

We thank you Lord for how your Spirit has been moving in and through this general assembly called the General Conference. For you have turned this convention center into a tabernacle of worship and holy conferencing. Creating among us a renewed sense of hope as we together create new pathways for the next visible expression and witness of The United Methodist Church. Lord God, we thank you for how your Spirit continues to be at work in the lives and through the Council of Bishops and through every bishop of The United Methodist Church. We especially thank you for those that we honor and celebrate this day. And so, Lord, I ask that you continue to give us your grace, that you continue to pour out your Spirit upon us as we continue to take up the mantle of leadership, loving and leading and shepherding your people and stewarding your mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Let the people of God say, Amen.

ALL: Amen.

BISHOP SCHOL: Amen. We want you just to hold steady for another moment. We do have announcements, but I want to say thank you very much for this opportunity to serve, and I appreciate all of those whose support the presiding. There’s a great team up here that all works together, and I’m just grateful for the support. We will now hear the announcements from the secretary, and with those announcements we will close the session tonight and look forward to seeing you tomorrow morning. Thank you.

GRAVES: Thank you, Bishop. As I said earlier in the session, I have received two pieces of communication that two persons are removing their names from the list of nominees to the Judicial Council. The first is Warren Plowden; the second is Deanell Tacha. In addition, I have received notification of another request to withdraw a name from the secretary-designate of the General Conference, Rev. Dr. Laishi Bwalya. Please remember that tonight your meal is from 6:30 to 8:00, and we have passed the 6:30 portion, so you will want to make your way there as quickly as we are able to do that. Remember that we have the prayer room available to you throughout the day if you would like to make use of it. And remember to take care of yourselves, rest, wash your hands, wear masks if you feel necessary or if you are more comfortable. Thank you.

PROCEEDINGS

2024-05-03

MORNING
AFTERNOON

2024-05-02

MORNING
AFTERNOON

2024-05-01

MORNING
AFTERNOON

2024-04-30

MORNING
AFTERNOON

2024-04-29

MORNING
AFTERNOON

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AFTERNOON

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Exhibit D

Calendar Item

Calen dar Item 547

Details

Created 2024-04-29 20:06:37.483

Petition # 20963-HS-1404

Subject Jurisdictional Study Committee Petition #1 – Number of Bishops in Jurisdictions

Membership	68	Present	49	For	33	Against	15	Not Voting	-3266	Date	2024-04-27 19:56:02.000
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Action Committee Moves to Adopt the above

Plenary Action

Date Voted 2024-04-30 17:23:13.000

For	660	Against	51
-----	-----	---------	----

Action Amend the Main Motion

Amend sub-section 2(a), at the end of the first sentence after the words "five bishops" a period and then the words:

The General Council on Finance and Administration shall include the costs of such bishops when recommending a quadrennial budget as provided by and required in Paragraph 818

THEN in paragraph 2(b) after amend the first to read:

A Jurisdiction, through its jurisdictional committee on episcopacy may request additional bishops exceeding the numbers provided in subparagraph a) above; provided, however, that the salary and often expenses of such bishops, as calculated by the General Counsel on Finance and Administration, shall be apportioned to the annual conferences of such jurisdiction. Any Jurisdiction seeking any Bishop(s) over the base number provided in subparagraph a) shall be able to demonstrate their ability to fund any additional Bishops by providing a surety to the General Council on Finance and Administration that they are sufficiently capable to meet the full funding of additional Bishop(s) for the coming quadrennium. The General Council of Finance and Administration will establish the base cost for the funding of an office of episcopal leader which shall be used by any Jurisdiction seeking to fund a number of Bishops over the base number of five.

Plenary Action

Date Voted 2024-04-30 17:27:31.000

For	666	Against	43
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Action Vote on Main Motion

Committee Report

The Petition stands as submitted.

Petition

Amend ¶ 404 by the following additions and deletions:

¶ 404. *Provisions for Episcopal Areas*

1. In central conferences, the number of bishops shall be determined on the basis of missional potential, as approved by the General Conference on recommendation of the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters. Before recommending changes in the number of episcopal areas, the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters shall:

a) consider these criteria in the following order of priority:

(1) the number of charge conferences and the number of active clergy in the episcopal areas;

(2) the geographic size of episcopal areas, measured by the square miles/square km, and the numbers of time zones and nations;

(3) the structure of episcopal areas, measured by the number of annual conferences, and the overall church membership in all annual, provisional annual, missionary conferences, and missions in episcopal areas.

b) conduct a further analysis of the context and missional potential of changes in episcopal areas.

2. In the jurisdictions, the number of bishops shall be determined on the following basis:

a) Each jurisdiction ~~having 300,000 church members or fewer shall be entitled to five bishops, and each jurisdiction having more than 300,000 church members shall be entitled to one additional bishop for each additional 300,000 church members or major fraction thereof.~~

~~b) If the number of church members in a jurisdiction shall have decreased by at least 10 percent below the number of church members which had previously entitled the jurisdiction to its number of bishops, then the~~ A jurisdiction, through its jurisdictional committee on episcopacy, may request additional bishops exceeding the number provided in subparagraph a) above; provided, however, that the salary and expenses of such additional bishops, calculated pursuant to the provisions of ¶ 818 (The Episcopal Fund), shall be apportioned to the annual conferences of such jurisdiction. The number of additional bishops to which it shall be entitled shall be determined on the basis of missional needs and financial ability of the annual conferences of the jurisdiction to support such additional bishops, as approved by the General Conference on the recommendation of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, provided however that said jurisdiction shall be entitled to no less than the number of bishops to which it would be entitled under subparagraph a) above. It shall be the responsibility of the affected jurisdiction, through its Committee on Episcopacy, to request consideration of its missional need for an exception additional bishops, and in the absence of such a request, there shall be no obligation on the part of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy to consider such an exception additional bishops nor to make any report or recommendation on such an exception additional bishops to General Conference. In no case shall there be any constraint on General Conference's power to act in the absence of such a recommendation or to reject any recommendation that might be received. Further, the provisions of this Paragraph shall not be construed to limit the authority of the jurisdictional conferences to determine the number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences and episcopal areas (¶ 40) or of the Colleges of Bishops to arrange the plan of episcopal supervision (¶ 48).

~~c) If a jurisdiction, as a result of the provisions of this paragraph, shall have the number of bishops to which it had previously been entitled reduced, then the reduction in the number of bishops to which it is entitled shall be effective as of September 1 of the calendar year in which said reduction has been determined by the General Conference. When a jurisdiction requests a change in the number of bishops for the jurisdiction, the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, in consultation with the jurisdictional committee on episcopacy for the affected jurisdiction, shall develop a timeline for implementation of the new number of bishops. The Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy shall recommend the timeline developed after such consultation to the General Conference for approval.~~



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Exhibit E

Calendar Item

Calendar Item 546

Details

Created	2024-04-29 20:06:37.483										
Petition #	20290-HS-11404-\$-G										
Subject	Financial Stewardship and Justice in the Allocation of Bishops										
Membership	68	Present	56	For	51	Against	1	Not Voting	-455	Date	2024-04-26 17:56:12.000
Action	Committee Moves to Not Support										

Plenary Action

Date Voted			2024-04-30 17:50:19.000
For	545	Against	170
Action	Amend the Main Motion by Substitution		
Retain ¶1404.1 as printed in the Discipline.			
Replace ¶1404.2 with these new provisions:			

In the jurisdictions, the number of bishops shall be determined on the basis of missional reasons, as approved by the General Conference on recommendation of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy. Before recommending the number of episcopal areas, the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy shall: a) consider these criteria in the following order of priority: 1. the number of charge conferences and the number of active clergy in episcopal areas; 2. the geographic size of episcopal areas; 3. the overall church membership in the annual conferences in the episcopal areas. b) conduct an analysis of the context and missional potential of changes in episcopal areas. c) analyze the capacity of the episcopal fund to determine the number of bishops that can be funded. The following groups shall be consulted during this analysis of the episcopal fund: the executive committee of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, the officers of the Council of Bishops, and the officers of the General Council on Finance and Administration. This petition is effective immediately.

Plenary Action

Date Voted			2024-04-30 18:24:56.000
For	407	Against	297
Action			Amend the Main Motion
to add "a minimum of five bishops for each jurisdiction"			

Plenary Action

Date Voted

2024-04-30 18:28:52.000

For

557 Against

119

Action

Vote on Main Motion

Petition

Amend ¶ 404 by deletion of all the current text and substitution of the following:

¶ 404. Provisions for Episcopal Areas—

1) Withstanding all other paragraphs, there shall be sixty-six (66) episcopal areas. Changes in the number allocated to a jurisdiction or central conference shall be effective September 1 if there is a reduction of areas and effective December 31 where there is an increase in areas.

2) For missional purposes, thirteen (13) episcopal areas will be allocated to selected central conferences as follows: to the Central and Southern Europe Central Conference, one (1) area, to the Germany Central Conference, one (1) area, to the Northern Europe and Eurasia Central Conference, two (2) areas, to the Philippines Central Conference, three (3) areas, and to the current Africa Central Conference, six (6) episcopal areas, which will be four (4) for South Africa Central and two (2) for East Africa Central if there is a division of the current Africa Central Conference.

3.a) The USA Jurisdictions, the Congo Central Conference, and the West Africa Central Conference are herein allocated the fifty-three (53) remaining episcopal areas. The allocation is to be determined on the uniform basis of proportionality, computed on the total combined clergy and lay membership therein, applying the membership numbers used to allocate delegates to the General Conference. To achieve the targeted whole number of bishops, the largest of the fractions remaining after an initial rounding may also be rounded.

3.b) There shall be no election of bishops within a jurisdiction or central conference that currently has more than the number calculated herein serving in an active role, defined as those elected for life who are below the retirement age. When the number of active bishops falls below the number calculated herein, then the resulting vacancy shall be filled. However, the number of episcopal areas may temporally exceed the allocated total of fifty-three (53), and the grand total of sixty-six (66), when necessary to respect a commitment to a lifetime election of a bishop in an active role.

September 18, 2019

Joe Wesley Kilpatrick

Laity, Tucker First UMC, Tucker GA 30084

404-964-3589 mobile

jkcpa71@gmail.com

Financial Implications:

Using the cost of active bishops published by GCFA in Report No. 5 from 2016 ADCA, page 618, we can compute the following savings.

Reduction in costs of 15 USA bishops:

15 fewer bishops at a cost of \$329,750 each, equals a reduction of \$4,946,250

Increase in costs of 15 additional African Bishops:

15 more bishops (five already scheduled by previous General Conference)

At costs of \$232,500 each, equals an increased cost of \$3,487,500

Net savings per year of \$1,458,500

Additional savings are likely to occur at the Episcopal level in the reduction of 15 bishops in the USA, because there may be a corresponding reduction in Conference staff and related costs not covered by the numbers presented in GCFA Report No. 5. If such costs are about \$175,000 per year, as some have suggested, then an additional savings of \$2,625,000 would be achieved.

The 53 areas allocated by proportionality are: North Central 5, Northeastern 5, South Central 8, Southeastern 12, Western 1, Congo Central 14, West Africa 8.



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2016

f) The ministry of administration. The role of the bishop is to uphold the discipline and order of the Church by consecrating, ordaining, commissioning, supervising, and appointing persons in ministry to the Church and the world. As the presiding officer of the annual conference, the resident bishop provides order and leads in new opportunities for ministry within the annual conference. The bishop shares with other bishops the oversight of the whole church through the Council of Bishops and is held accountable through the Council of Bishops in collaboration with conference and jurisdictional committees on episcopacy.

2. District superintendents are elders in full connection appointed by the bishop to the cabinet as an extension of the superintending role of the bishop within the annual conference through the same disciplines and in accordance with their responsibilities designated in the *Book of Discipline* under the supervision of the resident bishop

Section III. Election, Assignment, and Termination of Bishops

¶ 404. *Provisions for Episcopal Areas*

1. In central conferences, the number of bishops shall be determined on the basis of missional potential, as approved by the General Conference on recommendation of the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters. Before recommending changes in the number of episcopal areas, the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters shall:

a) consider these criteria in the following order of priority:

(1) the number of charge conferences and the number of active clergy in episcopal areas;

(2) the geographic size of episcopal areas, measured by the square miles/square km, and the numbers of time zones and nations;

(3) the structure of episcopal areas, measured by the number of annual conferences, and the overall church membership in all annual, provisional annual, missionary conferences, and missions in episcopal areas.

b) conduct a further analysis of the context and missional potential of changes in episcopal areas.

2. In the jurisdictions, the number of bishops shall be determined on the following basis:

a) Each jurisdiction having 300,000 church members or fewer shall be entitled to five bishops and each jurisdiction having

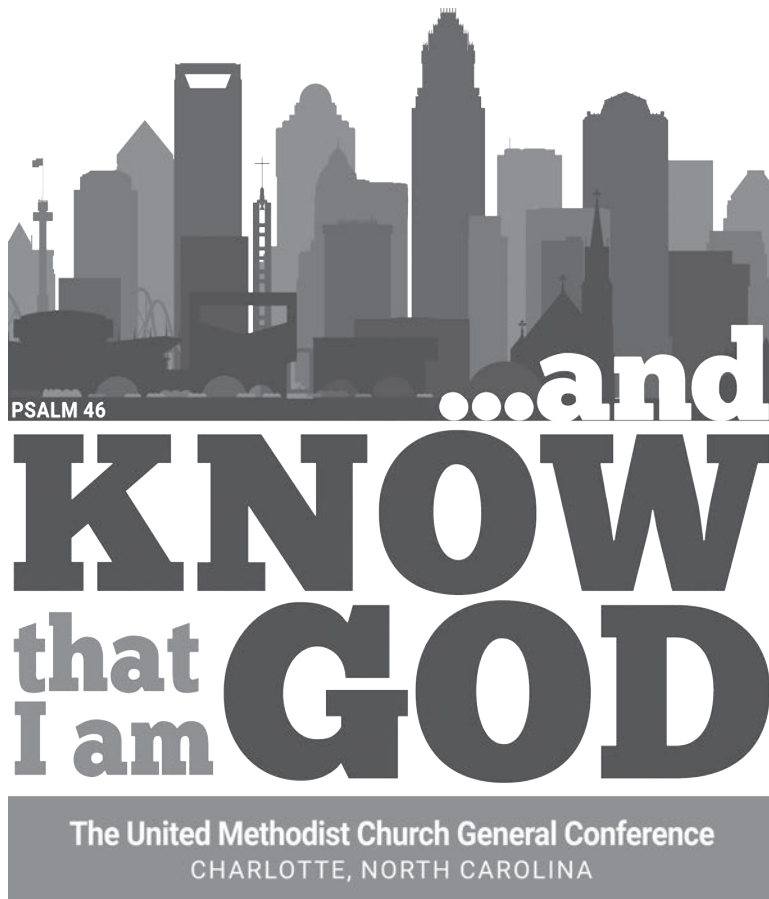
more than 300,000 church members shall be entitled to one additional bishop for each additional 300,000 church members or major fraction thereof.

b) If the number of church members in a jurisdiction shall have decreased by at least 10 percent below the number of church members which had previously entitled the jurisdiction to its number of bishops, then the number of bishops to which it shall be entitled shall be determined on the basis of missional needs, as approved by the General Conference on the recommendation of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy, provided however that said jurisdiction shall be entitled to no less than the number of bishops to which it would be entitled under subparagraph a) above. It shall be the responsibility of the affected jurisdiction, through its Committee on Episcopacy, to request consideration of its missional need for an exception, and in the absence of such a request, there shall be no obligation on the part of the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy to consider such an exception nor to make any report on such an exception to General Conference. In no case shall there be any constraint on General Conference's power to act in the absence of such a recommendation or to reject any recommendation that might be received.

c) If a jurisdiction, as a result of the provisions of this paragraph, shall have the number of bishops to which it had previously been entitled reduced, then the reduction in the number of bishops to which it is entitled shall be effective as of September 1 of the calendar year in which said reduction has been determined by the General Conference.

¶ 405. *Election and Consecration of Bishops*—1. *Nomination*—An annual conference, in the session immediately prior to the next regular session of the jurisdictional or central conference, may name one or more nominees for episcopal election. Balloting at jurisdictional and central conferences shall not be limited to nominees of annual conferences nor shall any jurisdictional or central conference delegate be bound to vote for any specific nominee. Each jurisdictional or central conference shall develop appropriate procedures for furnishing information about nominees from annual conferences. This shall be done at least two weeks prior to the first day of the jurisdictional or central conference. Similar procedures shall be developed for persons nominated by ballot who receive ten votes, or 5 percent of the valid votes cast, and the

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Conferences

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Volume 3

Nashville, Tennessee

Jurisdictional Study Committee Report to the Postponed General Conference 2020

This report has been modified since the original submission, which was provided in anticipation of a May session of the 2020 General Conference.¹

I. Preface and Executive Summary

The 2016 General Conference authorized a Jurisdictional Study Committee (JSC) comprising members of each of the five jurisdictions within the United States to review legislation related to jurisdictional boundaries and the number of bishops within jurisdictions in order to make a recommendation to the 2020 General Conference.² The stark realities of the worldwide pandemic, disaffiliations, church closures, and changes in budget realities have impacted the landscape for us all. That altered landscape opens a view that is panoramic in the consideration of options that present themselves as the peoples called United Methodist enter a new and exciting paradigm.

This executive summary and report is extended with the hope that the need to change is embraced as a blessing. “I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”³ Knowing that we are not the same as we were in years past, the JSC prayerfully extends this offering so that we collectively find our way into who God is calling us to be now and in the future.

The work of the JSC found its foundation in recognizing where we find ourselves going into the gathering of General Conference in 2024. Embracing the challenges before us, we know that fresh approaches must be considered for all aspects of our structure, systems, and sustainability. This includes being open to accept what resources avail themselves as we grow into our Spirit-led future.

The JSC represents the diversity of the five jurisdictions.

1 The Jurisdictional Study Committee reconvened in August 2023 to review our original report and decide upon edits to submit for consideration by the 2024 gathering of The General Conference.

2 References to the 2020 General Conference are intended to relate to the gathering of delegates in 2024.

3 Isaiah 43:19—New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

The JSC members reviewed legislation and the present *Book of Discipline* (BOD) and held conversations with jurisdictional leaders, GCFA, and bishops. We concluded that continuing with five jurisdictions and the current boundaries is appropriate. We further concluded that the membership formula to determine the number of bishops within the U.S. is no longer an accurate reflection of the leadership needs and mission within a jurisdiction. We are recommending that jurisdictions are in a better position to assess missionally the number of bishops to better reflect the missional, cultural, and contextual needs of the church today.

We are proposing legislation to eliminate the mathematical formula for calculating the number of active bishops in each jurisdiction, establish a minimum number of active bishops for each jurisdiction, and establish a process by which jurisdictions may request additional bishops (above the minimum number) based on the missional needs of the jurisdiction and the financial ability of the jurisdiction to support such additional bishops. The proposed process involves review of such requests by the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy and approval by General Conference. The salary and expenses of such additional bishops except for travel will be paid by the annual conferences within the affected jurisdiction rather than by general apportionment to all annual conferences.

II. Missional Rationale

The mission of The United Methodist Church is to *make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world* (BOD ¶ 120).

The annual conference is the fundamental body of The UMC (¶ 11) that organizes leaders, congregations, and ministries for the mission of the church. Annual conferences serve the mission by equipping local churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world (¶ 601).

Bishops lead the mission, supervising the clergy and congregations of an episcopal area that is made up of one or more annual conferences. Bishops cast a vision and offer clarity to influence, inspire, and mobilize the church to

accomplish the mission.

The number of bishops assigned in a U.S. jurisdiction is currently determined by a membership formula (§ 404.2). Jurisdictional conferences currently have the authority to determine the number, names, and boundaries of episcopal areas (§ 40). Each jurisdictional College of Bishops has the authority to arrange the plan of episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within their respective territories (§ 48).

A membership formula does not capture the missional and leadership needs within a jurisdiction and imposes limits on the ability of jurisdictions and jurisdictional Colleges of Bishops to fulfill their constitutional mandate. Issues related to how bishops lead and the number of bishops are best understood within the context of the region. A formula cannot ascertain and address:

1. Unique geographies, demographics, and urbanization in each jurisdiction
2. Complex differences among episcopal areas because of demographics and urbanization
3. Capacity for the ministry and work of the bishop to lead episcopal areas toward growth, mission, and vitality
4. Leadership needs
5. Number of congregations and clergy under supervision (including number of superintendents, clergy members, and lay supply pastors)
6. Number of annual conferences over which a bishop presides

Therefore, the number, assignment, focus, and support of U.S. bishops are best identified by those closest to the mission, including the leadership of the jurisdiction where people better understand the missional strengths, challenges, and opportunities.

We affirm the current language in the *Book of Discipline* that maintains a minimum of five bishops in each jurisdiction. Maintaining a minimum of five bishops allows U.S. jurisdictions to live into the new system of determining the number of bishops at the jurisdictional level, minimizing the level of change and disruption.

We also affirm that retaining the minimum number of U.S. episcopal leaders that currently exists (*BOD* § 404(2) (a)) maintains the connectional model while shifting a por-

tion of costs directly to the jurisdiction that incurs those costs.

To help offset the cost shifts associated with the proposed method for calculating apportionments, we are recommending that office expenses of episcopal areas in the U.S. be handled directly by each annual conference rather than being apportioned through the Episcopal Fund. Currently, annual conferences pay an apportionment to the Episcopal Fund only to receive funding back from the Episcopal Fund to reimburse for office costs. It is simpler and efficient for the conferences to pay the costs of the bishop's office directly. There would be no change for support of office expenses in the central conference episcopal areas.

III. Recommendations⁴

The following are the recommendations to the 2020 General Conference:

Continue the present number and boundaries of episcopal areas in the jurisdictions through 2024 when a new method of determining the number of episcopal areas will begin.

Continue the present method for setting episcopal area boundaries.

Continue the minimum number of five bishops within each jurisdiction.⁵

Discontinue a membership-based formula for determining the number of bishops in a jurisdiction and replace it with a process whereby each jurisdiction determines the number of bishops it needs and can financially support.

Discontinue the apportionment for episcopal office support in 2021 and institute a plan for the office to be paid for by the episcopal area.

To implement recommendation #4, we further recommend:

The Episcopal Fund will be apportioned across the connection for the costs of five bishops within each jurisdiction (the minimum number of bishops) for a total of twenty-five bishops across the connection.

The number of bishops over the minimum of five within a jurisdiction will be paid for by the annual conferences in that jurisdiction through an apportionment to those conferences beginning with 2025 apportionments. (Details of the financing are below.)

⁴ The JSC is fully aware that the work being done within The UMC relating to regionalization and other issues across the worldwide church may require further study and restricting as we, as a body, consider ourselves in a new, more equitable and nimble fashion.

⁵ The jurisdictions and their leaders have demonstrated incredible resilience, creativity, and capacity to be nimble in the myriad challenges of the past quadrennium. While this is new ground for us to till, with multiple considerations to be addressed simultaneously and brought into harmony, our jurisdictions have shown us we can adapt and find our way.

All travel and Council of Bishops' meetings will be apportioned across the connection.

Jurisdictional Committees on Episcopacy, in consultation with their Colleges of Bishops, will report to the Interjurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy their conclusion on the number of episcopal areas necessary to further the mission and ministry in their area and that they have the capacity to support.

The Interjurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy will report to the General Conference the number of bishops to be funded through the Episcopal Fund for the 2021-2024 quadrennium. The costs of episcopal areas approved by General Conference in addition to the minimum will be paid for by the annual conferences of that jurisdiction.

All bishops, whether funded by a connection-wide apportionment or apportioning the specific conferences within a jurisdiction, shall be employed by GCFA, which sets the salary, benefits, travel, and office expenses for all bishops.

No changes are recommended to
 episcopal areas outside the United States;
 apportionments in support of central conference bishops or their office expenses, the Council of Bishops, or interfaith work;
 the number or geographic makeup of jurisdictions as specified in ¶ 37; or
 the boundaries of episcopal areas within jurisdictions, which is under the authority of jurisdictions (¶ 27.4).

Further we strongly encourage the Interjurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy, which has the authority to recommend the number of bishops in each jurisdiction, to understand the missional necessity of maintaining the current number of bishops until jurisdictions consider the missional need in number of episcopal areas in 2028.

IV. Implementation

Per the *Book of Discipline* and current practice, the Interjurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy will recommend to the 2020 General Conference the number of bishops to be allocated to each U.S. jurisdiction. Jurisdictions will be allocated the number of bishops approved by the postponed 2020 General Conference for the 2025-2028 quadrennium.

To facilitate transition to the new process for determining the number of U.S. bishops, we recommend that the General Conference maintain the current number of bishops in each jurisdiction in recogni-

tion that the current formula creates an arbitrary and outdated threshold.

Proposals to change the apportionment methodology for the Episcopal Fund would commence with the 2025 apportionment year.

As soon as possible after the postponed 2020 General Conference, each Jurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy and College of Bishops will work together to develop a recommendation on the number of bishops needed within the jurisdiction to meet missional and capacity needs. The outcome of this work shall be reported to the next session of the General Conference and the Interjurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy. GCFA will assist with financial estimates of general and jurisdictional apportionments under various scenarios. This recommendation should include the following:

- A plan for episcopal area realignment only if there is a change (decrease or increase) in the number of bishops;
- A detailed description of recommended boundary changes;
- Estimates of changes to apportionments for annual conferences within the jurisdiction;
- A timeline for implementation;
- Provision for an implementation task force with lay and clergy representation, including delegation leadership from each affected annual conference.

The realignment plan should be shared with key leadership from each annual conference, including delegations once elected for the next scheduled General Conference, with opportunities for feedback.

Per ¶ 404 and ¶ 512, each jurisdiction will share with the executive committee of the Interjurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy the jurisdiction's recommendation for the number of bishops needed for missional and capacity reasons and a statement of the annual conference's ability to financially support that number of bishops (and the associated realignment plan, if applicable).

The executive committee of the Interjurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy will evaluate the recommendations, secure additional information if necessary, and make a recommendation to the full committee no later than the fifth day of the General Conference according to ¶ 512.

The executive committee of the Interjurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy will work with GCFA to determine if the conferences within a jurisdiction have paid 100 percent of their apportioned amount for their

bishops. Any jurisdictions in which conferences have not paid 100 percent will be reduced by the number of bishops of the total apportioned amount for a bishop or any portion thereof of unpaid episcopal area apportioned support.

Recommendations from the Interjurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy for any bishops more than the minimum per jurisdiction will be submitted to the General Conference, with an explanation of how the number of bishops in each jurisdiction differs from the previous quadrennium and a reminder that the financial burden of supporting bishops beyond the minimum number falls to the conferences within a jurisdiction and is not apportioned to annual conferences outside that jurisdiction. Through this report, the General Conference will then determine the number of bishops to be allocated to each U.S. jurisdiction for the following quadrennium by a majority vote of the General Conference.

Having established the number of episcopal areas through action of the General Conference based on the recommendation from the Interjurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy, GCFA shall prepare a recommended apportionment total of the Episcopal Fund for the ensuing quadrennium. The recommendation shall state the amounts apportioned (above the minimum) to specific jurisdictions for the costs of bishops. The proposed apportionments to the Episcopal Fund will be considered and approved by the next regularly scheduled General Conference.

Jurisdictional conferences meet in July 2028.

If there is no change in the number of episcopal areas, the jurisdictional conference elects the appropriate number of bishops to fill current vacancies.

If there is a reduction or increase in the number of episcopal areas, the jurisdictional conference will approve the proposed realignment plan, amending the plan as needed. They will then proceed to elect the requisite number of bishops according to the approved plan.

V. Cost Estimates

The JSC carefully evaluated the proposal's financial impact

upon the jurisdictions. Using actual financial results in 2018, we calculated the apportionment amounts requested from each U.S. jurisdiction under the current system and compared it to the amount that would be assessed under the proposed formula.⁶ (There would be no changes to the amounts apportioned to central conferences and no changes to the support from the Episcopal Fund to the bishops in the central conferences.)

Episcopal Fund apportionments under the proposed formula would be the sum of two calculations. The first calculation is similar to the current apportionment calculation but excludes the cost of bishops beyond the minimum number and excludes episcopal office expenses in the U.S. The second calculation covers the expenses for bishops over the minimum within each jurisdiction. The third calculation accounts for the shift in episcopal office expenses being removed from the apportionment formula and covered directly by each U.S. annual conference. Each of these calculations is described in more detail below.

The *first calculation* includes the following:

- the expenses for the minimum number of bishops in each jurisdiction including salary, housing, and benefits;
- area travel for all bishops;
- central conference bishops' salaries, housing, and benefits;
- central conference episcopal office support;
- Council of Bishops meeting expenses (including travel);
- Council of Bishops staff and office expenses;
- the costs of all retired bishops (whether jurisdictional or central conference);
- the costs of other episcopal groups and ecumenical presence;
- moving expenses;
- administrative charges (costs of GCFA to collect, disburse, and audit uses of the Episcopal Fund);
- a contingency (a reserve fund to manage unplanned expenses and emergencies);
- noncollectible apportionment allowance.

In 2018, these items used \$17.3 million in Episcopal Fund resources (using funds from apportionments and expected reserves from the Episcopal Fund). The amounts apportioned to annual conferences in each jurisdiction and central conference in 2018 for this piece of the Episcopal Fund apportionment in 2018 would have been:

⁶ The JSC is clear that current realities will require a reevaluation of the actual numbers as they exist at the time that GC convenes in 2024. We hope we will have updated numbers for an informed discussion when GC convenes in 2024.

Jurisdiction	First Calculation
North Central	2,638,380
Northeast	2,172,639
South Central	3,273,423
Southeast	5,213,740
West	922,865
African Central Conferences	664,618
European Central Conferences	149,500
The Philippines Central Conferences	65,997
Total	15,101,162

Added to those amounts would be a *second calculation*, which includes the costs of the bishops a jurisdiction requests to meet the missional needs of the area. The salary, housing, and benefit costs of the sixth, seventh, or any number of bishops in addition to the minimum will be added to the Episcopal Fund apportionment to the annual conferences *in that jurisdiction*. GCFA will work with jurisdictions in their planning for episcopal areas so the costs

of bishops in addition to the minimum are known. For the sake of comparison, we calculated the additional costs in 2018 for each jurisdiction for the number of bishops they had in that year. The Episcopal Fund apportionment to the annual conference would be the sum of the amount listed in the first calculation above plus this amount, under the second calculation as follows:⁷

Jurisdiction	Second Calculation (added apportionment for more than 5 bishops)
North Central (9 bishops)	955,889
Northeast (9 bishops)	955,889
South Central (10 bishops)	1,194,861
Southeast (13 bishops)	1,911,778
West (5 bishops)	0
Total	5,018,417

The Episcopal Fund apportionment to the annual conferences would add together these two calculations. The amount apportioned to the annual conferences in the jurisdictions under the proposal would be 17.5 percent lower, from \$23.2 million to \$19.2 million annually.

Finally, we propose that the Episcopal Fund no longer apportion and pay episcopal office support in the jurisdictions. Annual conferences pay an apportionment to the

Episcopal Fund only to receive money back from the Episcopal Fund to reimburse for office costs. Under the new proposal, annual conferences in the U.S. will pay the costs of the bishop's office directly⁸ rather than sending the money to GCFA and have GCFA send it right back. We recognize this change shifts the costs from the Episcopal Fund to the annual conferences. In 2018, we calculate the impact of this cost shift to be:

⁷ These examples are based on figures from 2018. This data must be updated to reflect more current realities before any reasonable consideration can be given to recommendations herein. Unfortunately, that data was not yet available as of the deadline for additional submissions. We hope we will have updated numbers for an informed discussion when GC convenes in 2024.

⁸ Office expenses for episcopal areas in the central conferences would continue to be paid through the Episcopal Fund.

Jurisdiction	Proposed Episcopal Office Expenses Paid Directly
North Central	776,268
Northeast	776,268
South Central	862,520
Southeast	1,121,276
West	431,260
Total	3,967,592

The financial impact on the annual conferences in jurisdictions is the sum of all three of these factors:

Support of the *minimum* number of jurisdictional bishops, central conference bishops, retired bishops, Council of Bishops, and other general costs itemized in the first calculation PLUS
the salary, housing, and benefit costs of bishops in addition to the minimum number in the jurisdiction PLUS

the costs of office expenses the conferences will pay directly rather than through the Episcopal Fund apportionment.

Taking these factors into consideration, the 2018 apportionment for annual conferences in each jurisdiction plus the additional costs of office expenses paid directly, compared to the current formula, would be:

Jurisdiction	Actual 2018 Apportionment	Estimated Apportionments plus episcopal office costs paid directly as proposed	Change from current formula
North Central	4,352,382	4,370,536	0%
Northeast	3,758,908	3,904,796	4%
South Central	5,399,978	5,330,805	-1%
Southeast	8,600,805	8,246,793	-4%
West	1,522,398	1,354,126	-10%
Total	23,634,472	23,207,056	-2%

VI. Proposed Legislation

The Constitution of The United Methodist Church establishes an interconnected set of authorities leading to the determination of the number of bishops authorized for election and assignment in the jurisdictional conferences. The Judicial Council has observed that “[t]he system balances and constrains the power exercised by each of the authorities individually and by all connectionally” (Decision 1312). Colleges of Bishops have authority to arrange the plan of episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within their respective territories (§ 48).

Jurisdictional conferences have authority to determine the number, names, and boundaries of the annual conferences and episcopal areas (§ 40). Colleges of Bishops have authority to arrange the plan of episcopal supervision of the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and missions within their respective territories (§ 48). General Conference has authority to “fix a uniform basis upon which bishops shall be elected by the jurisdictional conferences” (§ 16.10) and to “determine and provide for raising and distributing funds necessary to carry on the work of the Church” (§ 16.9); the Judicial Council has reasoned that this dual authority granted to General Conference determines how many bishops there will be in each jurisdiction

(Decision 1312). Our legislative proposals attempt to take into account the tension created by these competing constitutional provisions in an effort to create a new process that allows the determination of the number of bishops in the jurisdictions to be based on missional needs rather than a strict mathematical formula, while shifting the financial responsibility for support of bishops beyond the minimum number directly to the jurisdiction.

In an effort to advance the recommendations outlined in this report, the JSC has drafted several petitions for submission to the secretary of the General Conference. These petitions are summarized as follows:

JSC Petition #1 proposes amendments to ¶ 404 (Provisions for Episcopal Areas) that will eliminate the mathematical formula for calculating the number of active bishops in each jurisdiction, establish a minimum number of active bishops for each jurisdiction, and establish a process by which jurisdictions may request additional bishops (above the minimum number) based on the missional needs of the jurisdiction and the financial ability of the jurisdiction to support such additional bishops. The proposed process involves review of such requests by the Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy and approval by General Conference. The salary and expenses of such additional bishops will be paid by annual conferences within the affected jurisdiction rather than by general apportionment to all annual conferences.

JSC Petition #2 proposes amendments to ¶ 512 (Interjurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy) to authorize that committee to receive and act on requests from jurisdictions for additional bishops authorized

by the proposed amendment of ¶ 404.

JSC Petition #3 proposes amendments to ¶ 524 (Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy) to include the responsibility for making the request for additional bishops authorized by the proposed amendment of ¶ 404.

JSC Petition #4 proposes amendments to ¶ 818 (Episcopal Fund) to remove episcopal office expenses of jurisdictional bishops from the Episcopal Fund apportionment but retain the current practice of generally apportioning the office expenses of the central conference bishops.

JSC Petition #5 is a non-disciplinary petition that proposes setting the number of active bishops in each jurisdiction for the 2024-28 quadrennium at the same number authorized by action of the 2016 General Conference in order to allow Jurisdictional Committees on Episcopacy and Colleges of Bishops to engage in the assessment of missional needs and financial capacity of the jurisdiction, which will be part of the determination of the number of active bishops in the jurisdictions authorized by the next regularly scheduled General Conference and to facilitate smooth transition in any jurisdiction anticipating a change in the number of its bishops based on that assessment.⁹

Prayerfully Submitted by the Judicial Study Committee
September 6, 2023

⁹ Where years for annual conference need to be updated in the referenced petitions, the JSC incorporates those changes by reference for consistency.