

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2016

DELETE ARTICLES II & IV OF THE CONFERENCE STRUCTURE AND REPLACE THEM WITH THE FOLLOWING:

ARTICLE II: THE MISSIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A. PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

1. Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and the local church provides the most significant arena through which our disciple-making occurs (*Book of Discipline*, ¶201).
2. The purpose of the Annual Conference is to advance this mission “by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing for connectional ministry beyond the local church” (¶601).
3. In order to accomplish this mission, the Annual Conference functions to equip and encourage our local churches to become “vital congregations”: congregations that lead others to abundant life in Jesus Christ; engage in their communities; learn, live, and tell the Gospel story; and reach out to and draw in people from all walks of life (Matthew 22:36-40; Matthew 28:16-20).
4. In order to give priority to our missional purpose and to our commitment to developing vital congregations, the Louisiana Conference will be organized into three Ministry Areas in addition to and as a compliment of the strategic and equipping ministry of the Bishop and Cabinet (¶401ff., ¶414ff., ¶419ff.). The Bishop, Cabinet, and the three ministry areas will work together in a connectional relationship in order to strengthen the local churches in their mission and ministry.
5. The three ministry areas are (1) Vital Congregations, (2) Clergy Excellence, and (3) Administrative Ministries. The purpose of these Ministry Areas is to fulfill the missional purpose of the Annual Conference, to grow vital congregations, and to provide for other ministries as required by *The Book of Discipline*.

B. MINISTRY AREAS

1. **Vital Congregations** will serve to equip and empower local churches to lead others to abundant life in Jesus Christ; engage in their communities; learn, live, and tell the Gospel story; and reach out to and draw in people from all walks of life. The purpose of this work is to empower local churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. It will do so by fostering shared ministry among local churches and by providing for connectional ministry beyond the local church.

In addition to other responsibilities outlined in the *Discipline* and Conference Rules, a Director of Connectional Ministries (see Article III, A.1.a.) will coordinate this ministry area and convene the leaders of these teams in order to encourage collaboration in our effort to grow vital congregations and to ensure faithfulness to the purpose of the Annual Conference (§ 601) and the mission of The United Methodist Church (§ 120).

Vital Congregations will be comprised of the following ministries:

- a. A Church Planting Ministry** will coordinate the formation of new vital congregations by directing the work of planting new faith communities, mergers of existing churches to form new congregations, and other strategic and creative models for starting vital faith communities. A Board of Congregational Development of no fewer than 7 persons, laity and clergy, will function to support Conference staff assigned to this ministry, provide missional accountability, maintain a budget, and provide financial oversight.
- b. A Church Revitalization Ministry** will coordinate the revitalization of congregations that have potential for new growth. Task forces and advisory teams may be formed to assist in this work as needed.
- c. The Conference Discipleship Team** will assist local churches in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The ministry of this team includes, but is not limited to, the ministries outlined in §630 of *The Book of Discipline*. In accordance with §645, the Discipleship Team will assume the responsibilities of the small-membership-church commission.

Members shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected for the quadrennium and shall consist of a team leader, four at-large members, the Conference Lay Leader representing the Board of Laity (§631), one person responsible for the concerns of small-membership churches, and the coordinator of The Academy for Spiritual Leadership. The Discipleship Team may organize task forces or teams in order to accomplish its mission.

d. The Mission and Mercy Ministries Team will assist the Conference and our local churches in our response to the needs of our communities, state, nation, and world. The Team will serve the Conference in the following areas:

1. Board of Church and Society (§629) and Peace with Justice (§629.2)
2. Board of Global Ministries (§ 633)
3. Disability Ministries (§653)
4. Status & Role of Women (§644)
5. Religion & Race (§643)
6. Christian Unity and Interreligious Ministries (§637)
7. Ethnic Local Church Ministries (§632)
8. Native American Ministries (§654)
9. Disaster Preparedness
10. Volunteers in Mission

Members shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected for the quadrennium. The team shall consist of a team leader, two at-large members, and a representative for each of the ministries listed above. The representative of each area of responsibility above will serve to maintain a connectional relationship between the Mission and Mercy Ministries Team and the equivalent General Agencies. The Team may organize task forces or teams in order to accomplish its mission.

e. The Council on Youth Ministry, Young Adult Ministry, Conference Board of Laity, the United Methodist Women, and the United Methodist Men shall be organized and function in accordance with *The Book of Discipline*.

f. The Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline* (§634). Members of the Board shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected for the quadrennium and shall consist of six members. A member of a local Wesley Foundation and a Campus Minister will be selected as ex-officio members without vote. Additional task forces or teams may be added by Board members as needed to fulfill their assigned mission.

g. A Communications Team shall be organized for the purpose of meeting the missional needs of local churches and the Conference in the area of communications, with a particular focus on enhancing witness and evangelism efforts of the local church through the use of various and effective forms of communication. The Team will additionally be responsible for the ministry outlined in §646. A Director of Communications (§609) will work with the Communications Team to specifically connect this ministry with the mission of creating vital congregations.

2. Clergy Excellence shall actively engage in the recruitment and development of clergy who are able to lead in the disciple-making ministry of the church and who will effectively equip local churches to lead others to abundant life in Jesus Christ; engage in their communities; learn, live, and tell the Gospel story; and reach out to and draw in people from all walks of life. The purpose of this work is to empower local churches to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. A Director of Clergy Excellence (see Article III, A.1.b.) will coordinate the work of this ministry area.

Clergy Excellence will be comprised of the following ministries:

a. Conference Board of Ordained Ministry

The Conference Board of Ordained Ministry shall be organized and function as mandated and described in *Book of Discipline*, § 635.

The Bishop shall nominate members of the Board after consultation with the chairperson of the Board, the executive committee, and the Cabinet. The Bishop shall fill vacancies after consultation with the chairperson of the Board.

b. Center for Pastoral Excellence

The Center for Pastoral Excellence is to help sustain pastoral excellence by providing support and guidance for our clergy and congregations in difficult situations, conversations, and conflict; coaching clergy as a confidential and trusted resource; offering continuing education opportunities; working on special projects/contexts as requested by the Bishop and Cabinet; and offering other ministries related to the art and science of pastoral leadership.

c. Conference Committee on Administrative Review

The Committee on Administrative Review shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 636.

3. Administrative Ministries will provide administrative support to the Annual Conference in order to help it fulfill its purpose and mission.

The Executive Director of Administrative Services will act as a liaison between the ministries of this ministry area to ensure faithfulness to the purpose of the Annual Conference (¶ 601) and to the mission of The United Methodist Church (¶ 120).

Administrative Ministries will be comprised of the following:

a. Conference Council on Finance and Administration

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration shall be organized and shall function as mandated and described in *The Book of Discipline* (¶¶ 611–619).

1. Membership and Officers

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration shall consist of twelve members nominated by the Committee on Nominations and approved by the Annual Conference in accordance with ¶612.2 of the *Discipline*. There shall be at least one lay member more than clergy members. Churches of fewer than two hundred members shall be represented on the council. Members of the General Council on Finance and Administration who reside within the bounds of the Conference shall be voting members. The voting membership shall not include members or employees of any conference agency, nor shall it include members, employees, trustees, or directors of any agency or institution participating in the funds of any conference budget. The CCFA shall elect its own officers in accordance with ¶612.3.

Additionally, the following persons shall be ex officio members without vote (¶ 612.2c):

1. Executive Director, Administrative Services/Conference Treasurer
2. Presiding Bishop
3. One District Superintendent chosen by the Cabinet
4. Director of Connectional Ministries

5. President/Chief Executive Officer, United Methodist Foundation

2. Audit Review Committee

The Conference Council on Finance and Administration may elect an Audit Review Committee (*Discipline* ¶ 617) of not more than twenty-five members; at least half of whom should be persons who are not members of the Council and who are chosen for their expertise in areas related to the work of the Committee. The Bishop shall be an *ex officio* member of the Audit Review Committee.

3. Conference Benevolence Budget

In preparing the conference benevolence budget (¶614.3), the CCFA will consult with and receive recommendations from the Director of Connectional Ministries and the leaders of the teams in Vital Congregations.

b. Conference Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline* (¶2512). The members of the Board shall be residents of the State of Louisiana and of legal age. Lay members shall be members in good standing of local churches within the bounds of the Conference, and clergy members shall be members of the Louisiana Annual Conference.

c. Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits

The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline* (¶ 639). In addition to membership recommended in the *Discipline*, the Executive Director of Administrative Services/Treasurer shall be a member. One director of the Woolworth Foundation shall be an *ex officio* member, with vote.

d. Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation

The Commission on Equitable Compensation shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline* (¶ 625). The membership shall be elected for the quadrennium, and shall consist of six persons, an equal number of lay and clergypersons. At least one lay member and clergy member shall be from churches of fewer than two hundred members.

e. Conference Committee on Nominations

There shall be a Conference Committee on Nominations chaired by the Bishop and composed of the following members:

- Bishop
- Conference Lay Leader
- President, Conference Council on Youth Ministry
- a young adult representative
- up to six at-large members to insure Conference representation, inclusiveness, and a balance of clergy and lay membership

The members of the committee shall serve for the quadrennium. Laypersons must be full members of local churches in the Conference.

The Committee shall nominate to the Annual Conference such officers and members of Boards, Councils, Committees, and Commissions as the *Discipline* or the Conference Rules require, or as the Conference deems necessary to its work. Persons nominated and approved by the Annual Conference are to serve for the quadrennium unless otherwise indicated by the *Discipline* or Conference Rules. The Committee on Nominations may nominate persons for Annual Conference approval to fill vacancies that occur during the quadrennium. Guidelines for inclusiveness shall be followed in accordance with *The Book of Discipline*. Members of General Agencies will serve as additional *ex officio* members of the corresponding Annual Conference agencies, and the Bishop may assign Cabinet liaisons to the ministry areas, teams, boards, and agencies as needed.

f. Conference Committee on the Journal

There shall be a Conference Committee on Journal elected for the quadrennium. Members of the Committee shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected for the quadrennium. Membership shall consist of two clergy and two lay members, the duties of which shall include those described in Article I (N) of the Conference Rules.

g. Conference Committee on Courtesies

There shall be a Conference Committee on Courtesies elected for the quadrennium, which shall have such duties as described in Article I (M) of the Conference Rules. The membership shall consist of six persons.

h. Conference Committee on Petitions

There shall be a Conference Committee on Petitions elected for the quadrennium having such duties as described in Article I (G) of the Conference Rules. The membership shall consist of five persons.

i. Conference Committee on Rules

There shall be a Committee on Rules appointed by the Bishop for the quadrennium having such duties as described in Article I (S) of the Conference Rules. The membership shall consist of six persons, equally clergy and laypersons.

j. Conference Commission on Archives and History

The membership shall consist of two persons and a Cabinet liaison, if assigned by the Bishop, and conference staff as assigned by the Director of Connectional Ministries.

C. CONFERENCE COMMITTEES RELATED TO THE EPISCOPACY

1. Conference Committee on Episcopacy

The Committee on Episcopacy shall be constituted, organized, and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline* (§ 637). The membership shall number nine. No

member of the Conference staff or any of its agencies, nor any immediate family member of such staff, shall serve as a member of the committee, except as allowed by the *Discipline*.

2. Conference Episcopal Residence Committee

This Committee shall be organized and function as mandated and described in the *Book of Discipline*, ¶ 638.

ARTICLE III: PERSONNEL

A. CONFERENCE STAFF

1. Conference Ministries Staff

a. Director of Connectional Ministries

The Bishop, in consultation with the Missional Staffing Committee, may appoint a Director of Connectional Ministries to guide the Conference in its mission of increasing the number of vital congregations, to focus and guide the ministries of the Congregational Vitality ministry area, to assume the responsibilities outlined in ¶608 of the *Discipline*, and to supervise Conference ministry staff. The Director of Connectional Ministries may sit on the Cabinet, without vote. The Director of Connectional Ministries is accountable to the Bishop and shall be evaluated annually by the Bishop to discern effectiveness in accomplishing the specific requirements of the ministry. The Bishop will seek input, as needed, from the Team leaders in Congregational Vitality.

b. Director of Clergy Excellence

The Bishop, in consultation with the Missional Staffing Committee and the Board of Ordained Ministry, may appoint a Director of Clergy Excellence to promote and sustain effective clergy leadership and to coordinate the ministries of the Clergy Excellence ministry area. The Director of Clergy Excellence may sit on the Cabinet, without vote. The Director of Clergy Excellence is accountable to the Bishop and shall be evaluated annually by the Bishop to discern effectiveness in accomplishing the specific requirements of the ministry. The Bishop will seek input, as needed, from the Executive Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

c. Assistant to the Bishop

The Bishop may appoint an Assistant to the Bishop in order to more effectively and efficiently administer the episcopal ministry. The Assistant to the Bishop may sit on the Cabinet, without vote. The Assistant to the Bishop is accountable to the Bishop and shall be evaluated annually by the Bishop to discern effectiveness in accomplishing the specific requirements of the ministry. The Bishop will seek input, as needed, from the Conference Committee on the Episcopacy.

d. Conference Mission and Ministries Staff

Upon recommendation of the Missional Staffing Committee, other persons may be employed in areas deemed helpful to accomplish the mission of the Annual Conference. If the person to serve in any of these areas is clergy, the employment shall not be effective until the Bishop appoints that person to the position. The Director of Connectional Ministries will supervise the Mission and Ministries staff. Staff positions may be amended by action of the Missional Staffing Committee, as long as such changes are within budgeted funds and consistent with the missional priorities of the Annual Conference.

2. Finance & Administrative Service Staff

a. Conference Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services

The election of the Conference Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services and the functions of the office are prescribed in the *Book of Discipline* (§ 619). The Conference Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services shall be elected by the Annual Conference on nomination of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration. As an employee, the Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services shall be directly amenable to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration and shall be evaluated annually by the CCFA to discern effectiveness in accomplishing the ministry assigned. The Conference Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services shall be amenable to the general oversight of the Bishop regarding the fiscal operation of the Annual Conference.

b. Administrative Staff

Administrative and support staff in Administrative Services shall be employed as directed by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration. The Conference Treasurer/Executive Director, Administrative Services will be responsible for supervision of the administrative and support staff. Funding for staff positions shall be derived from the Conference Administrative Fund upon recommendation of the Missional Staffing Committee and upon approval by the CCFA.

c. Conference Secretary and Conference Statistician

The duties of the Conference Secretary and Conference Statistician shall be a part of the responsibilities of the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Service, but may be delegated to volunteer or part-time staff under the direction of the Conference Treasurer/Director of Administrative Service.

3. Personnel Policies & Procedures

a. Missional Staffing Committee

The Missional Staffing Committee shall be composed of a representative who is a member of and chosen by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, a

representative who is a member of and chosen by the Discipleship Team, the Bishop, a District Superintendent, the Director of Connectional Ministries, the Conference Lay Leader, and the Director of Administrative Services. Up to two additional members may be added for inclusiveness. The Committee shall select a chairperson from among its members, but the chairperson shall not be a member of the Conference staff.

b. Personnel Policies and Procedures

The Missional Staffing Committee will develop and maintain appropriate personnel policies and procedures. The Committee will further develop and implement a plan for regular supervision and evaluation that will take into account appropriate missional measures and effectiveness in particular areas of responsibility. Supervision will include clear missional goals and expectations of each staff person.

Should termination of employment become necessary, that action shall be the responsibility of the Missional Staffing Committee. If the person to be terminated is serving under appointment, the Committee shall consult with the Bishop before terminating employment.

ARTICLE IV: ASSESSMENT OF CONFERENCE EFFECTIVENESS

A **Conference Ministry Assessment Team** will meet twice per quadrennium to evaluate the effectiveness of the Conference in accomplishing its mission. The purpose and mission of the Annual Conference (§601) will serve as the criteria for evaluation, and particular attention will be given to the ministries of increasing vital congregations and improving clergy effectiveness. The Team shall make recommendations to the Missional Staffing Committee concerning revision of ministry descriptions, as needed. The Team shall make recommendations to the Annual Conference concerning changes, if needed, in the Conference organization, staffing structure, rules, practice, or procedure.

To accomplish its ministry, the Team shall request reports, as it deems necessary, from Conference staff, ministry area leaders, team leaders, and other people in Conference leadership. The Team shall conduct interviews as it deems necessary and review metrics relevant to the congregational vitality and clergy excellence. The Team may retain the services of an outside consultant to accomplish its mandate.

The Team will be comprised of five persons who are not concurrently serving on a standing Conference ministry area, board, agency, or team. Membership on this Team shall not preclude a person from serving on ad hoc teams, planning teams, study committees, other Conference ministries of limited duration, or District committees. The members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee, may be laity or clergy, and shall serve for a quadrennium. The Team shall name its own chairperson and shall organize officers as needed.