

2020 Michigan Annual Conference Voting Items Booklet

ANNUAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

Res. No.	Resolution title	Leg. Cmt.	Pg
R#2020-1	Authorize CBOPHB Health Insurance Benefits Claims	Plenary	3
R#2020-2	Establish the Housing/Rental Allowance for Retired or Clergy on Disability	Plenary	3
R#2020-3	2021 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan	Plenary	4
R#2020-4	Establish Past Service Rate	Plenary	5
R#2020-5	Retiree Group Health Care Plan amendment	LC 5	5
R#2020-6	Vote on Which Post-separation Church to Join	Plenary	6
R#2020-7	Keep Any Exit Gracious	LC 7	6
R#2020-8	Amend Conference Plan of Organization – new paragraph re Inclusiveness	LC 1	7
R#2020-9	Amend Conference Plan of Organization – Conference Leadership Council Membership	LC 1	8
R#2020-10	Amend Conference Plan of Organization – Council on Finance and Administration, Membership	LC 1	8
R#2020-11	Amend Conference Plan of Organization – Board of Trustees, Membership	LC 1	9
R#2020-12	Creation of Michigan Conference Affiliations Task Force	LC 2	9
R#2020-13	Create Conference Committee on LBGTQIA+ Ministry	LC 3	11
R#2020-14	Create Conference Worship Supplemental Task Force	LC 4	12
R#2020-15	Create Conference Anti-racism Task Force	LC 4	13
R#2020-16	LBGTQIA+ Ministries Conference-wide Special Offering	LC 5	13
R#2020-17	Readers to Leaders Conference-wide Fundraising Appeal	LC 6	14
R#2020-18	Covenant of Ministry Partnership with Liberia Annual Conference	LC 6	15
R#2020-19	Conference Policy on Use of Proceeds from Sale & Accumulated Assets of Local Church Property	LC 7	17
R#2020-20	Michigan UMC Gun-Free Zones	LC 8	18
R#2020-21	Questions for Candidates for Federal Offices	LC 8	18
R#2020-22	Recognize Unborn Baby	LC 9	19
R#2020-23	2021 Equitable Compensation Guidelines and Schedule	LC 7	20

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE (LC) ASSIGNMENTS

LC1 (Gov. Hall) -- R#2020-8, R#2020-9, R#2020-10, R#2020-11

LC2 (Tower A) -- R#2020-12

LC3 (Tower B) -- R#2020-13

LC4 (Tower C) -- R#2020-14 & R#2020-15

LC5 (Mackinac) -- R#2020-5 & R#2020-16

LC6 (Peninsula) -- R#2020-17 & R#2020-18

LC7 (Mich AB) -- R#2020-7, R#2020-19, R#2020-23

LC8 (Mich CD)-- R#2020-20 & R#2020-21

LC9 (Mich EFGH)-- R#2020-22

1 **R#2020-1**

PLENARY

2 **Authorization for CBOPHB to address claims**

3
4 **Motion:**

5 Authorize The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (CBOPHB) to negotiate, compromise, or
6 submit to arbitration any claims for benefits that may arise under the Michigan Conference Health Care Plan,
7 the Michigan Conference Lay Employee Welfare Plan (death and disability), the United Methodist Retirement
8 Plans (Pre-82, Ministerial Pension Plan, Clergy Retirement Security Program, United Methodist Personal
9 Investment Plan), the United Methodist Clergy Welfare Plan (Comprehensive Protection Plan); and for that
10 purpose to retain legal counsel as needed. The CBOPHB will be considered the final appeal and have final
11 authority to decide any issue in the event of a dispute or disagreement by a participant.
12

13 **Rationale:**

14 Per The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, the Conference Board of Pension & Health
15 Benefits is the responsible entity to administer and ensure the accuracy of conference related benefits, as
16 well as review participant inquiries or discrepancies.
17

18 **Submitted by:**

19 Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits
20 Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President
21 Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & Human Resources
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28 **R#2020-2**

PLENARY

29 **Establish the Housing/Rental allowance for retired clergy**
30 **or clergy on medical leave**

31
32 **Motion:**

33 The Michigan Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits moves to establish the Housing/Rental
34 Allowance for retired or clergy on medical leave status (receiving disability benefits) in the Michigan
35 Conference as follows:

- 36 1) An amount equal to 100% of the pension/disability payments received during the year 2021 is hereby
37 designated as a rental/housing allowance for each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister
38 of The United Methodist Church who is or was a member of the Michigan Conference at the time of
39 his or her retirement or disability;
- 40 2) This rental/housing allowance shall apply to each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister
41 who has been granted the retired relationship or placed on medical leave by the Michigan Conference
42 and whose name and relationship to the conference is recorded in the Journal of the Michigan
43 Conference or in other appropriate records maintained by the conference;
- 44 3) The pension/disability payment to which this rental/housing allowance applies shall be the
45 pension/disability payment resulting from all service of such retired and disabled ordained or licensed
46 ministers from all employment by any local church, annual conference or institution of The United
47 Methodist Church, or from any other employer who employed the minister to perform services related
48 to the ministry and who elected to make contributions to the pension and welfare funds of The United
49 Methodist Church for such retired minister's pension or disability benefits;
- 50 4) The amount of the housing/rental allowance that may be excluded is limited to the lesser of: a) the
51 amount designated as the housing/rental allowance, or b) the amount actually expended for
52 housing/rent, or c) the fair rental value of housing, if required by law.
53
54

1 **Rationale:**

2 The United Methodist Church has and functions through Ministers of the Gospel who are duly ordained or
3 licensed. The practice of The United Methodist Church is to provide a parsonage or housing allowance as a
4 part of the gross compensation for each of its active ordained or licensed ministers. Pensions paid to retired
5 and disabled ordained or licensed ministers of the United Methodist Church are considered deferred
6 compensation and are paid to said retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers in consideration of
7 previous active service. The Internal Revenue Service has recognized that the Michigan Conference is the
8 appropriate body to designate a housing/rental allowance for retired and disabled ordained or licensed
9 ministers who are members of this conference.

10
11 **Submitted by:**

12 Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits
13 Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President
14 Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & Human Resources
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21 **R#2020-3**

PLENARY

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23 **2021 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan**
24

25 **Motion:**

26 The Michigan Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits moves to authorize the Conference Board of
27 Pension and Health Benefits to review and approve the 2021 Comprehensive Benefit Funding Plan (CBFP)
28 upon successful completion of the CBFP and receipt of a favorable "letter of opinion" from Wespath Benefits
29 & Investments.

30
31 *[NOTE: Due to Wespath's timeline, their review and "letter of opinion" cannot be completed by the conference
32 deadline for submitting resolutions. The "letter of opinion" will be available online and in the final printed
33 materials once it is received from Wespath.]*
34

35 **Rationale:**

36 Per 2012 General Conference action, all annual conferences are required to develop, adopt and implement a
37 comprehensive funding plan encompassing all conference benefit obligations. The funding plan must be
38 submitted to Wespath Benefits & Investments for review. After receiving a favorable, written opinion from the
39 Wespath actuaries, it must be approved annually by the annual conference.
40

41 **Submitted by:**

42 Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits
43 Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President
44 Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & Human Resources
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1 **R#2020-4**

PLENARY

Establish Past Service Rate

Motion:

5 The Michigan Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits moves to establish the 2021 Past Service
6 Rate (PSR) for the Ministers' Reserve Pension Fund (Pre-82) at \$860. The surviving spouse benefit shall
7 remain at 85 percent.

Rationale:

10 The PSR of \$860 per year of eligible service provides a 2% pension increase for retirees and maintains a
11 1.29 ratio relative to the Conference Average Compensation (PSR/CAC) as per conference policy.

13 Reserves invested in the Pre-82 Pension Plan are sufficient to fund the increased rate while maintaining a
14 fully funded account balance/surplus for future liabilities.

Submitted by:

17 Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits

18 Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President

19 Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & Human Resources

26 **R#2020-5**

LC 5

Retiree Group Health Care Plan Amendment

Motion:

30 Amend the Retiree Group Health Care Plan by addition in the Definition of Terms:

31 3. Years of service in another United Methodist Conference will be eligible for Service Credit for Health
32 Benefits if the clergy member has transferred membership to the Michigan Conference, served a minimum of
33 ten continuous years prior to retirement, and participated in the Michigan Conference health care plan during
34 the years of service in Michigan Conference.

Rationale:

37 The United Methodist Church is a connectional body, recognizing the ordination and service across
38 conference lines.

- 39 1. The Michigan Conference prides itself on being a welcoming conference and often recruits clergy from
40 other conferences to serve in Michigan.
- 41 2. Bringing in experienced pastors is good for Michigan Conference.
- 42 3. Pastors starting their career in another conference then moving to the Michigan Conference for an
43 appointment should not be penalized in their retirement after serving at least ten years in the Michigan
44 Conference.

Submitted by:

47 Dirk Elliott, Director of Congregational Vibrancy

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1 **R#2020-6**

PLENARY

2 **Vote on Which Post-separation Church to Join**

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4 **Motion**5 The 2020 Michigan Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall take a plenary session vote on
6 the following question:7 Because the Michigan Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church can be offered the
8 opportunity to choose a direction for its future under the proposed Protocol, that direction be either:

9 (1) remaining a Conference within the Post Separation United Methodist Church, or

10 (2) Becoming a Conference within a new Traditional expression of Methodism whose policies include
11 the 2016 Book of Discipline (as amended through Feb 28, 2019) language on "homosexuality," same gender
12 marriage and LGBTQIA+ ordination.
1314 If agreed to, this vote will be taken without further debate and this item will be scheduled for a vote no later
15 than 2 PM Saturday, May 30, 2020, to insure full participation of delegates.
1617 **Rationale:**18 It is expected that the 2020 General Conference will adopt changes in the Book of Discipline which allow for
19 annual conferences to amicably depart from the entity "The United Methodist Church" and join a new
20 denomination as described in the new enabling legislation as *The Traditionalist UMC* which will maintain the
21 current stance of the *UMC Book of Discipline* regarding the practice of homosexuality. It will emphasize unity
22 around doctrine, mission and standards; leaner denominational structure; greater local flexibility; and
23 accountable discipleship. The results of this vote will then allow discernment and decision process to begin
24 concerning future affiliations for individual churches, individual members and clergy members.
2526 **Submitted by:**27 Robert Hegel,
28 Mio UMC
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3233 **R#2020-7**

LC 7

34 **Keep Any Exit Gracious**

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36 **Motion:**37 Require the Michigan Annual Conference trustees to remove the Withdrawal Agreement provision that
38 requires churches to pay "10 percent of the value of the equity of Local Church's church building and
39 associated land" before making a Gracious Exit. ¶4a1.
4041 **Rationale:**42 If the conscience of a local church leads it reluctantly toward disaffiliation, the parting of ways should be done
43 in a spirit of peace. Besides respecting the resources required to support the local mission, it would be deeply
44 unhealthy to trap such churches in the Annual Conference with financial hurdles. Such hurdles should
45 therefore be eliminated—regardless of whether the local church takes a "traditionalist" or "progressive"
46 position on human sexuality. The motion above thus effectuates core Wesleyan principles such as "do no
47 harm."
4849 The 10% equity payment also contradicts explicit church law. The Gracious Exit provisions do permit Annual
50 Conferences to "develop additional standard terms" for disaffiliating churches, ¶2553(a). But that authority is
51 highly limited. The MAC may add only such terms that "are not inconsistent with the standard form," ¶2553(a).
52 On any fair reading of ¶2553, it is "inconsistent" with the Gracious Exit plan for Annual Conferences to add
53 any additional disaffiliation fees, let alone one so onerous as 10 percent of equity. For some churches this fee
54 more than doubles the disaffiliation burden.

1 The property rule established by new ¶2553(c) is categorical: “a disaffiliating local church shall have the right
 2 to retain its real and personal, tangible and intangible property” of all kinds—a description that includes both
 3 physical property and financial assets. The scope of this blanket Discipline entitlement is limited only by the
 4 terms of ¶2553 itself. And ¶2553 specifies only three such limitations on that entitlement, by requiring
 5 disaffiliating churches to pay: (a) “apportionments for 12 months,” ¶2553(b); (b) “additional 12 months,”
 6 ¶2553(b); and (c) “pro rata share of ... unfunded pensions,” ¶2553(d). ¶2553(c) specifically entitles local
 7 churches to retain all other property—including financial assets. Any additional charge is therefore
 8 “inconsistent with” ¶2553. The 10% equity charge is therefore impermissible under the Discipline.
 9

10 **Submitted by:**

11 Ruth Ann Church and Julian Mortenson
 12 members FUMC Ann Arbor
 13
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18 **R#2020-8**

LC 1

19 **Amend Conference Plan of Organization – new paragraph re Inclusiveness**
 20

21 **Motion:**

22 Amend the Plan of Organization by addition of a new section §1 as indicated below and renumber the
 23 remaining sections and sub-sections accordingly:
 24

25 §1. Inclusiveness of The Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church

26 The Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of
 27 sacred worth. All persons without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity,
 28 relationship, ability, national origin, status, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its
 29 worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as
 30 baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members
 31 in any local church in the Conference. In The Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church,
 32 no local church or other organizational unit of the conference shall be structured so as to exclude any
 33 member or any constituent body of the conference because of race, color, gender, sexual orientation,
 34 gender identity, relationship, ability, national origin, status, or economic condition. Nor shall any
 35 member be denied access to an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of the conference,
 36 local church, or other organization unit of the conference because of race, color, gender, sexual
 37 orientation, gender identity, relationship, ability, national origin, status, or economic condition.
 38

39 **Rationale:**

40 In light of recent actions of the special 2019 General Conference and the 2020 General Conference, the
 41 Michigan Conference seeks to be clear about the full inclusion of all people, especially LBGTQIA+ people, in
 42 the life, worship, and governance of the conference.
 43

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 47 And eight others
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1 **R#2020-9**

LC 1

2 **Amend Conference Plan of Organization –**
 3 **Conference Leadership Council Membership**

4
5 **Motion:**

6 Amend the Plan of Organization of the Michigan Conference, Section 2.1.3.2, “Conference Leadership
 7 Council Membership, Ex officio with voice and vote” by adding:

8 2.1.3.2.5 Chair of the Conference Board of Trustees or their designee

9 2.1.3.2.6 Chair of the Conference Human Resources Committee or their designee

10 2.1.3.2.7 Chair of the Conference Board of Pension and Benefits or their designee

11
12 **Rationale:**

13 This concept was initially considered by the Design Team. It has become apparent that without these three
 14 entities being consistently able to contribute to and participate in Conference Leadership Council decisions,
 15 important elements of legal, property, pension, benefits and personnel matters are inadequately connected to
 16 the overall strategy and alignment of resources of the conference. The Board of Ordained Ministry and the
 17 Council on Finance and Administration are already present on the CLC. This places all administrative and
 18 program leadership around a common table.

19
20 **Submitted by:**

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 22 Chairperson of the Conference Leadership Council.
 23 (517) 918-2215 amayomoyle@yahoo.com

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29 **R#2020-10**

LC 1

30 **Amend Conference Plan of Organization –**
 31 **Council on Finance and Administration, Membership**

32
33 **Motion:**

34 Amend the Plan of Organization of the Michigan Conference, Section 4.1.3.3, “Council on Finance and
 35 Administration, Membership, Ex officio with voice only”, by adding:

36 4.1.3.3.8 Chair of the Board of Trustees or their designee

37
38 **Rationale:**

39 It has become apparent that without these two entities (Trustees & CFA) being consistently able to contribute
 40 to and participate in various intersecting decisions, important elements of legal, financial and property
 41 matters, are inadequately connected to the overall strategy and alignment of resources of the conference.

42
43 **Submitted by:**

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1 **R#2020-11**

LC 1

2 **Amend Conference Plan of Organization – Board of Trustees, Membership**

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4 **Motion:**

5 Amend the Plan of Organization of the Michigan Conference, Section 4.4.3.3, “Board of Trustees,
6 Membership, Ex officio with voice, but not vote,” by adding:
7 4.4.3.3.3 President of the Council on Finance and Administration, or their designee
8

9 **Rationale:**

10 It has become apparent that without these two entities (Trustees & CFA) being consistently able to contribute
11 to and participate in various intersecting decisions, important elements of legal, financial and property
12 matters, are inadequately connected to the overall strategy and alignment of resources of the conference.
13

14 **Submitted by:**

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16 Chairperson of the Conference Board of Trustees
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18
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22 **R#2020-12**

LC 2

23 **Creation of Michigan Conference Affiliations Task Force**

24
25 **Motion:**

26 The Michigan Conference shall have an Affiliations Task Force as follows:
27

28 Purpose: To recommend the creation of an alternative structure, specific to the Michigan Conference, that
29 allows congregations to affiliate based on shared theological, missional, and structural affirmations with a
30 degree of self-governing autonomy. The Task Force shall consider the Affiliations model set forth below as
31 one possible alternative structure.
32

33 Membership: By August 1, 2020, the Bishop shall appoint 10-12 members to the task force which shall
34 include at least one representative of the CFA, CLC, and Board of Trustees. The Bishop or his representative
35 and the Director of Connectional Ministries shall be Ex-officio members. Attention should be given to race,
36 age, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, geographic region, and ability and
37 demonstrated evidence of innovation in thought and practice of ministry.
38

39 Organization: The Bishop will convene the task force by September 1, 2020, and chair this first meeting. The
40 Task force shall organize itself in anyway it sees fit.
41

42 Report and Recommendations: The Task Force shall provide a report of its work to the 2021 Annual
43 Conference along with its recommendations for an alternative structure for the Michigan Conference.
44

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46
47 Possible Affiliations Alternate Structure for the Michigan Conference
48 to be added to the Plan of Organization as a new § 12
49

50 § 12 AFFILIATIONS

51 12.1 Purpose. An affiliation is an alternative structure, specific to the Michigan Conference, that allows
52 congregations to affiliate based on shared theological, missional, and structural affirmations with a degree of
53 self-governing autonomy. It is an interim structure providing space for experimentation and transition to
54 possible new forms of Methodism in Michigan.

1 12.2 Formation of Affiliation. From July 1, 2021, until June 30, 2022, a group of at least 12 congregations
2 and/or campus ministries may request in writing to the resident Bishop of Michigan to form an affiliation. The
3 Bishop, in consultation with the Cabinet, Conference Leadership Council, and Council on Finance &
4 Administration, must respond in writing with a decision within 14 days of receiving the request.
5

6 12.3 Time Limit. Affiliations shall only exist until July 1, 2025, after which time member congregations must
7 decide to join an emerging expression of Methodism, form its own expression of Methodism, or remain in the
8 Annual Conference.
9

10 12.4. Congregations. Member congregations will be under the supervision of the resident Bishop of Michigan,
11 but not under the supervision of the District Superintendent where they were located.
12

13 12.5. Clergy. Clergy appointed to congregations and/or campus ministries within an affiliation will remain
14 members of the Michigan Conference and under the supervision of the resident Bishop of Michigan.
15

16 12.6. Convening meeting. The resident Bishop of Michigan shall call and preside over a convening meeting of
17 all the professing members of congregations of the affiliation within 30 days of approving the formation of an
18 affiliation. The convening meeting shall elect the Affiliation President(s) and Affiliation Leadership Team.
19

20 12.7 Affiliation President(s). The Affiliation shall elect a President or Co-Presidents from among the clergy and
21 professing members related to the affiliation. The president's term will be the length of the affiliation's
22 existence. The President(s) would consult with the Bishop in matters of appointments and clergy supervision
23 and would preside over annual charge conferences. The President(s) may also convene an annual gathering
24 of the Affiliation membership. The Conference shall not provide the financial compensation of the
25 President(s).
26

27 12.8 Affiliation Leadership Team. Each affiliation shall have an Affiliation Leadership Team.
28

29 12.8.1 The team shall consist of between six and 15 members elected at the convening meeting. The
30 members shall serve for the entirety of the affiliation's existence. The President(s) shall be a member
31 with voice and vote.
32

33 12.8.2. The Affiliation Leadership Team shall elect its own officers: a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer,
34 who shall also be the officers of the Corporation. It may elect such additional officers as it deems
35 appropriate.
36

37 12.8.3. The Affiliation Leadership Team shall be the primary programmatic, fiduciary and
38 administrative agency of the affiliation. It may create such subcommittees and other agencies as it
39 deems appropriate.
40

41 12.8.4. The Affiliation Leadership Team officers shall serve as the Board of Trustees for the affiliation
42 and perform all functions inherent in a Board of Trustees, including the owning of any affiliation real
43 estate and being the party to any legal contracts. Unless the Affiliation Leadership Team is directed
44 by the Annual Conference Board of Trustees, the Annual Conference Board of Trustees shall be
45 responsible for the sale of all closed church buildings and parsonages in the affiliation or owned by
46 the affiliation.
47

48 12.8.5. The Affiliation Leadership Team shall receive and manage all invested and budgeted funds
49 held by the affiliation. Additional invested funds may be received through gift, fundraising, or the
50 receipt of the proceeds of the sale of closed church property, as determined by the Annual
51 Conference. With the advice of the Bishop and the Conference Leadership Council, the Affiliation
52 Leadership Team shall make all decisions regarding the use of invested and budgeted funds in the
53 mission and ministry of the affiliation.
54

1 12.9. Incorporation. All affiliations shall be separately incorporated and shall comply with the Michigan Non-
 2 Profit Corporation Act. The bylaws shall describe the duties of the Officers and Directors. The Affiliation
 3 Leadership Team shall be the Board of Directors of the corporation. The officers of the Affiliation Leadership
 4 Team shall be the officers of the corporation.
 5

6 12.10. Reporting and Accountability. The Affiliation Leadership Team shall make oral and written annual
 7 reports as requested to the Michigan Conference of all of its activities, including the receipt, investment,
 8 management and disbursement of assets. The Affiliation Leadership Team shall also be amenable to the
 9 Conference Leadership Council and shall be amenable to the Conference Board of Trustees for property
 10 related matters and to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration for all financial matters.
 11

12 **Rationale:**

13 In light of recent actions of the special 2019 General Conference and the possible uncertainties from the 2020
 14 General Conference, the Michigan Conference seeks to create an interim structure to allow space and
 15 freedom for Michigan United Methodists to affiliate based on shared theological, missional and structural
 16 affirmations.
 17

18 **Submitted by:**

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 20 C. David Lundquist (269) 352-0582 dlundquist@ameritech.net
 21 And nine others
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26 **R#2020-13**

LC 3

Create Conference Committee on LBGTQIA+ Ministry

29 **Motion:**

30 Amend the Plan of Organization by addition of a new Section 3.10 to create a Committee on LBGTQIA+
 31 Ministry of the Annual Conference as follows:
 32

33 §3.10 COMMITTEE ON LBGTQIA+ MINISTRY

34 3.10.1 Purpose.

35 3.10.1.1 Develop and support leadership for ministry with the LBGTQIA+ community
 36 within the annual conference.

37 3.10.1.2 Train, support, and empower LBGTQIA+ clergy and lay leadership for
 38 effective ministry in their churches, their communities, and the world.

39 3.10.2 Duties – The committee shall, in keeping with its purpose (as set forth in § 3.10.1,
 40 above), define its duties in any way it sees fit, subject to the approval of the
 41 Conference Leadership Council.

42 3.10.3 Membership –

43 3.10.3.1 Insofar as possible, the majority of the committee's members should be
 44 LBGTQIA+ persons.

45 3.10.3.2 The committee shall define its membership in any way it sees fit, subject to
 46 the approval of the Conference Leadership Council.

47 3.10.4 Organization – The committee shall organize itself in any way it sees fit, subject to the
 48 approval of the Conference Leadership Council.

49 3.10.5 Amenability – The committee shall be amenable to the Conference Leadership Council
 50 (§ 2.1, above).
 51

52 **Rationale:**

53 In light of recent actions of the special 2019 General Conference and the 2020 General Conference, the
 54 Michigan Conference seeks to create a committee to lead the conference in ministry with Michigan's
 55 LBGTQIA+ community.

1 **Submitted by:**
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 4 And eight others
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8 **R#2020-14**

LC 4

Create Conference Worship Supplemental Task Force

10
 11 **Motion:**

12 The Michigan Conference shall have a Michigan Worship Supplemental Task Force with the following
 13 purpose, membership, organization, and amenability:
 14

15 Purpose: Create a Michigan Worship Supplement the Book of Worship and United Methodist Hymnal
 16 with a focus on expansive language for God, contextually relevant and culturally competent liturgies
 17 and hymnody for ministry with diverse Michigan communities, with special focus on racial/ethnic and
 18 LGBTQIA+ communities in Michigan. The task force shall bring a plan and budget to create the
 19 Michigan Worship Supplemental to the 2021 Annual Conference for consideration and vote.
 20

21 Membership: The Bishop, in consultation with the Chair of the Commission on Annual Conference's
 22 Worship Committee, the Associate Director of Multicultural Vibrancy and the Director of
 23 Congregational Vibrancy, shall appoint at least 10 and no more than 12 members to the task force.
 24 Attention should be given to race, age, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender
 25 identity, and geographic region. Ex-officio members: The Bishop, the Chair of the Commission on
 26 Annual Conference's Worship Committee, the Director of Congregational Vibrancy, and the Associate
 27 Director of Multicultural Vibrancy.
 28

29 Organization: The Bishop will convene and chair the first meeting of the task force. The Task force
 30 shall organize itself in anyway it sees fit.
 31

32 Amenability: The task force is amenable to the Conference Leadership Council.
 33

34 **Rationale:**

35 Due to the uncertainty of the denomination caused by the 2016 General Conference and the 2019 Special
 36 General Conference, the general church efforts to update the 1989 United Methodist Hymnal are on hold. A
 37 Michigan Conference Worship Supplemental Task Force would explore the possibility of creating a much
 38 needed 21 century, contextually relevant, and culturally competent resource for the Michigan Conference.
 39

BUDGET: (Six, one day meetings (August 2020-January 2021))

40	Mileage	\$35 average at volunteer rate x 16 members x 6 meetings	3,400
41	Food	\$12 x 16 members x 6 meetings	<u>1,200</u>
42	TOTAL		\$4,600

43
 44 **Submitted by:**

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 47 And eight others
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1 **R#2020-15**

LC 4

2 **Create Conference Anti-racism Task Force**

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4 **Motion:**

5 The Michigan Conference shall have an Anti-racism Task Force with the following purpose, membership,
6 organization, and amenability:

7
8 Purpose: The task force shall create a conference-wide anti-racism training plan and budget to
9 present to the 2021 Annual Conference for consideration and vote.

10
11 Membership: The Bishop, in consultation with the Chair of the Conference Commission on Religion &
12 Race, the Associate Director of Multicultural Vibrancy, and the Associate Director of Mission &
13 Ministry, shall appoint at least 12 and no more than 16 members, 75% of whom shall be people of
14 color, to the task force. Attention should be given to age, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual
15 orientation, gender identity, geographic region, and previous experience with anti-racism work. Ex-
16 officio members: The Bishop, the Associate Director for Multicultural Vibrancy, and the Associate
17 Director for Mission and Ministry.

18
19 Organization: The Bishop will convene and chair the first meeting of the task force. The Task force
20 shall organize itself in anyway it sees fit.

21
22 Amenability: The task force is amenable to the Conference Leadership Council.

23
24 **Rationale:**

25 Intentional resistance and dismantling of systemic racism and other forms of oppression is crucial to
26 proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, living as a Christian disciple, and fulfilling the United Methodist
27 Church's mission of "making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world" in the 21st century.
28 The Anti-racism Task Force will create an actionable plan for the Michigan Conference to engage in this holy
29 work.

30 BUDGET: (Six, one day meetings (August 2020-January 2021))

31 Mileage	\$35 average at volunteer rate x 16 members x 6 meetings	3,400
32 Food	\$12 x 16 members x 6 meetings	1,200
33 Consultation/Training (Based on Crossroads/ERACCE rates)		<u>7,000</u>
34 TOTAL		\$11,600

35
36 **Submitted by:**

37 Rev. Edwin A. Rowe (313) 268-0068 whereisthepastor@yahoo.com
38 Rev. Mark E. Thompson (269) 591-0731 mark757984@gmail.com
39 And eight others

40
41
42
43
44 **R#2020-16**

LC 5

45 **LBGTQIA+ Ministries Conference-wide Special Offering**

46
47 **Motion:**

48 The Michigan Conference establishes a LBGTQIA+ Ministries Conference-wide Special Offering to be
49 observed on the second Sunday of June each year. Seventy percent of funds raised shall benefit Michigan
50 Conference ministries with LBGTQIA+ people. Thirty percent of funds raised shall benefit existing Michigan
51 organizations serving the LBGTQIA+ people and communities. The Conference Committee on LBGTQIA+
52 Ministries shall be responsible for the disbursement of funds raised.

53

Rationale:

In light of recent actions of the special 2019 General Conference and the 2020 General Conference, the Michigan Conference seeks to express its commitment to ministry with LBGTQIA+ people and support for long-standing organizations serving Michigan's LBGTQIA+ communities.

Submitted by:

Deb Search Willoughby (269) 762-3259 dsearchwillo@charter.net

George Jonte-Crane (313) 269-8701 geopau226@yahoo.com

And eight others

R#2020-17

LC 6

“Readers to Leaders” Conference-wide Fundraising Appeal

Motion:

The Michigan Conference establishes a conference-wide fundraising appeal, entitled “Readers to Leaders” from June 1, 2020, to January 1, 2021, with the goal of raising \$480,000 -- \$240,000 will benefit the Liberia Scholarship Program of the Michigan Conference’s Liberia Ministry Partners and \$240,000 will benefit the Michigan Conference’s Children Defense Fund Freedom Schools Program.

Each congregation will be challenged to raise at least \$600 with \$300 to benefit Liberia Scholarship Program of the Michigan Conference’s Liberia Ministry Partners and \$300 to benefit the Michigan Conference’s Children Defense Fund Freedom Schools Program.

Rationale:

The “Readers to Leaders” Conference-wide appeal will make a life-changing investment in the lives of children in Michigan and Liberia.

The Liberia Ministry Partners (formerly the Liberia Task Force) is establishing the Liberia Scholarship Program to celebrate the renewal of the covenant between the Liberia and Michigan Conferences. Three hundred dollars will cover the school fees for one student at a United Methodist school in Liberia. The goal of the program is to raise funds to cover fees for 800 students.

The Michigan Conference’s Children Defense Fund (CDF) Freedom School’s Program currently operates two sites at Detroit: Second Grace UMC and Flint: Bethel UMC. The CDF Freedom Schools program is a six-week summer literacy and cultural enrichment program designed to serve children and youth in grades K–12 in communities where quality academic enrichment programming is limited, too expensive, or non-existent. The goal is to raise \$240,000 to fund three new sites in the Michigan Conference for three years.

This proposal was reviewed and approved by both the Conference Leadership Council and the Conference Council on Finance & Administration.

Submitted by:

Lisa Batten, Conference Coordinator of Young Adult Ministries lbatten@michiganumc.org

Rev. Jon Reynolds, Chair of Liberia Ministry Partners jreynolds@casscommunityumc.org

R#2020-18

LC 6

Covenant of Ministry Partnership with the Liberia Annual Conference

Motion:

Be it resolved that the Michigan Annual Conference approve the following new *Covenant of Partnership in Ministry and Working Understandings* governing our work with the Liberia Annual Conference.

The Covenant

The Liberia Annual Conference and Michigan Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church desire to seek God's will together as we reach out to the world's peoples in both our countries and conferences. Remembering Jesus' words, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the greatest commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' " (NRSV Mt. 22:37-39), we agree to establish a Partnership in Ministry between our two conferences, and do hereby covenant to:

1. Continue to support each other by our prayers and the sharing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit with our intellect, our physical being and our resources.
2. Continue to educate the laity and clergy of both conferences about the faith; ethnic groups, tribes and races; customs; social issues; geography; politics and other aspects of both countries. We shall seek, while learning from each other, to develop connections between individuals, families, communities, and congregations.
3. Continue to seek opportunities for two-way visitations, such as Volunteers in Mission teams, and to learn from one another.
4. Continue to find creative ways in which we can support each other through the established channels of The United Methodist Church.
5. Continue to evaluate our Partnership in Ministry relationship at least quadrennially.

This Covenant replaces in its entirety the previous Covenant Relationship document between the Liberia Annual Conference and the Detroit Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church adopted in 1998.

Working Understandings

1. The Partnership in Ministry between the Liberia Annual Conference and the Michigan Annual Conference is a mutually agreed upon relationship. The boards, agencies, and districts of the two conferences will be involved in its implementation and evaluation. Any change in this covenant requires mutual agreement.
2. The Conference Board of Global Ministries will represent the Michigan Annual Conference while the Liberia Annual Conference will be represented by its executive committee. Each entity shall designate the persons or groups that will represent it in the administration and evaluation of this covenant.
3. Coordination of all partnership activities within a conference shall be the responsibility of the respective conference. The sister conference may appoint a representative to coordinate the work with those responsible within the conference.
4. Any request for funding or work teams shall be for projects that have been approved by both the Liberia and Michigan Annual Conference leadership.
5. The guiding principle in developing and implementing joint projects shall be the "*In Mission Together Partnership Covenant*" as suggested by the General Board of Global Ministries.
6. All projects shall be socially just and ecologically sustainable.
7. In regard to Volunteers in Mission teams and visitations, efforts shall be made to
 - a. encourage the exchange of work teams - people working side-by-side in both countries.
 - b. seek to ensure that teams not displace local labor.
 - c. seek opportunities for visitations of persons from both conferences.
 - d. have any groups from either of the two conferences be inclusive as applicable with regard to race, tribe, age, sex, financial capability, clergy, laity and geographical areas.
8. Individuals, Churches and Districts in the Michigan Area will be encouraged to support projects identified by the Liberia Annual Conference Strategic Plan. Special emphasis will be placed on the

1 areas of Education, Agricultural Development and Water Justice along with the continued support for
2 the Bishop Judith Craig Children’s Village.

- 3 9. Individuals, Churches and Districts in the Liberia Annual Conference will be encouraged to share their
4 testimonies and experiences with the people in the Michigan Annual Conference to help people in
5 Michigan grow in our faith.
6

7 **Addendum**

8 Any changes to the covenant expressed herein, requires the mutual consent of the parties.
9

10 In the event either party wishes to withdraw from this relationship, a notice is required to be served on the
11 other party to the covenant following consultations between the parties.
12

13 And that the Executive Committees of the Liberia Annual Conference and the Liberia Michigan Task Force
14 shall enforce the execution of this covenant.
15

16 Approved by the Michigan Annual Conference: _____
17 Date

18 For the Michigan Annual Conference: _____
19 Bishop David A. Bard

20 Michigan Conference Secretary: _____
21 Rev. Joy Barrett
22

23 Other signatures representing Michigan Conference Board of Global Ministries, Chair of Liberia Partnership in
24 Ministry, etc.
25
26

27 **Rationale:**

28 This “Covenant” and “Working Understanding” was sent to the Liberia Annual Conference for their approval
29 and signatures.
30

- 31 1. The Detroit Annual Conference has been working with the Liberia Annual Conference for over 20
32 years.
33 2. Some churches and individuals of the West Michigan Conference have also been involved in Liberia.
34 3. The Detroit Annual Conference helped establish the Bishop Judith Craig Children’s Village early in
35 our relationship to provide a place of love, care and Christian education for orphans during and
36 following their civil war. Some West Michigan Conference churches have helped provide support and
37 even funded the building of some of the children’s cottages.
38 4. The Detroit Annual Conference has been sending Volunteer in Mission teams to work on many
39 projects to assist in rebuilding churches, schools, hospitals, water wells, etc. in Liberia following the
40 civil war.
41 5. Medical teams from both conferences have assisted with medical care and birthing.
42 6. The Detroit Annual Conference has been hosting Liberian Bishops and many leaders as they have
43 come to share their ministry with our churches and many West Michigan congregations welcomed
44 them also.
45 7. The Detroit Annual Conference has hosted two national Liberia Partner Summits of United Methodist
46 conferences and local churches working in Liberia.
47 8. In April 2018 we provided leadership working with Bishop Samuel Quire and Liberian United
48 Methodist leaders to develop a five-year ministry and development plan for the Liberia Annual
49 Conference.
50

51 **Submitted by:**

52 Rev. Jon Reynolds
53 Chair of the Michigan Conference Liberia Ministry Partnership
54
55
56

R#2020-19

LC 7

**Conference Policy on Use of Proceeds
from Sale & Accumulated Assets of Local Church Properties**

Motion:

(A) Following the closure or discontinuance of a local church building, whenever the conference Board of Trustees disposes of any real property or other assets, the proceeds from the sale thereof shall be distributed in the following order of priority:

- (1) Outstanding secured loans shall be repaid.
- (2) Expenses, including but not limited to utility payments, legal fees, closing costs, necessary improvements, maintenance, and upkeep incurred in connection with the asset disposition, shall be reimbursed.
- (3) Outstanding health insurance and/or pension obligations shall be paid to the conference.
- (4) Outstanding ministry shares and/or district apportionments for the year in which the church closed shall be paid to the conference and district, respectively.
- (5) Any identifiable unused grant funds and outstanding unsecured loans shall be returned to the agencies from whence they came.

(B) Following the aforesaid, any remaining proceeds shall be distributed as follows:

- (1) Fifty percent shall be given to the Council on Finance and Administration, which shall either use the funds for capital expenditures or shall earmark the funds for future capital expenditures (including, but not limited to capital expenditures for new church starts).
- (2) Fifty percent shall be given to the district and shall be distributed by the district leadership team (or equivalent structure) in accordance with ¶¶ 2549.7 and 212 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (or the equivalent paragraphs in any future applicable *Book of Discipline*), which set forth the requirements for the use of such funds in urban transitional communities.

(C) Notwithstanding (B), above, for any church closure or discontinuance in the district containing the City of Detroit, any proceeds remaining after the payments required by (A), above, shall be distributed as follows:

- (1) Fifty percent shall be given to the Council on Finance and Administration, which shall either use the funds for capital expenditures or shall earmark the funds for future capital expenditures (including, but not limited to capital expenditures for new church starts).
- (2) Ten percent shall be given to the district and shall be distributed by the district leadership team (or equivalent structure) in accordance with ¶¶ 2549.7 and 212 of the 2016 *Book of Discipline* (or the equivalent paragraphs in any future applicable *Book of Discipline*), which set forth the requirements for the use of such funds in urban transitional communities.
- (3) Forty percent shall be distributed to the United Methodist Union of Greater Detroit.

Rationale:

This policy contains only one substantive change from the previous policy, which was adopted in 2018 and may be found on page 272 in the [2018 Journal](#).

Closed churches were often many decades old and often served several generations of people throughout the years. Previously, funds distributed to the conference were to be used with priority and emphasis on new church starts. This often meant paying short-term expenses in unstable contexts. Once this money was spent, it was gone forever. The new policy requires the conference to invest its share of the remaining proceeds in capital expenditures. This ensures that proceeds from churches that served generations in the past will be saved and used to serve generations in the future.

Submitted by:

Council on Finance and Administration
Rev. Brad Bartelmay, President
Andrew Wayne, Vice President

R#2020-20

LC 8

Michigan UMC Gun-free Zones

Motion:

The Michigan Conference United Methodist churches and ministry settings shall remain "Gun-free Zones," except for police officers and other officials required to carry while on or off duty.

Rationale:

We, the people of the Michigan Conference United Methodist churches believe in the power and grace of God. We believe that it is God who is our strength and hope. We desire to be a witness to the world that guns are not the answer to violence and are not the way to live. Therefore, as a statement and witness to the amazing transformative mercy of God, we believe and testify that our trust, hope and strength is in the Name of Jesus.

Every season, we learn of violence that destroys life and community. We recognize that the freedom to own a firearm is part of our nations Constitution, and our states have the power to write laws regarding the way people carry weapons. And yet, we the people of the United Methodist Church choose to be different and proclaim that we have put our trust in the living God, who is our rock and our salvation.

The House Bill 4771 would lift the restrictions of gun owners from carrying weapons into churches, preschools, sporting areas and bars/taverns. If House Bill 4771 does pass through the Michigan Legislation and becomes law, we agree that our United Methodist churches and ministry settings shall remain "gun free" despite the change.

Submitted by:

Rev. Thomas A. Davenport, Parchment United Methodist Church
Michigan Conference Board of Justice, Rev. George Covintree, Chair
And two other groups

R#2020-21

LC 8

Questions for Candidates for Federal Offices

Motion:

The 2020 Michigan Conference invites Michigan's United Methodists to review our SOCIAL PRINCIPLES and *The BOOK of RESOLUTIONS* to discover our positions relative to the following questions and then to ask the candidates for the U.S. President and Congress for their answers to those questions.

1. Do you support reducing Pentagon spending by at least \$200 billion annually, a level well above our nation's post WWII average, so we can fund real investments in human needs?
2. The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church condemns "the production, possession, or use of nuclear weapons." Do you support the U.S. entering the International Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which is supported by a majority of the world's nations?
3. Do you support a "No First Use" nuclear weapons policy where the U.S. would commit to never initiating a nuclear exchange?
4. Both the U.S. and Russia are in compliance with the New START nuclear treaty limiting each side to 1,550 deployed strategic nuclear weapons. Do you support extending the New START nuclear treaty, which expires in February, 2021, to ensure that U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals are capped and inspected?

- 1 5. What would you do to prevent war with Iran? Do you support reentering the Iran Nuclear Agreement
- 2 and pursuing other diplomatic approaches to address tensions with Iran?
- 3 6. Do you support an immediate and responsible withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq, Syria, and
- 4 Afghanistan?
- 5 7. U.S. military support for the Saudi and UAE-led war in Yemen has helped give rise to the worst
- 6 humanitarian crisis on the planet, yet it was never authorized by Congress. Do you support ending all
- 7 arms sales and military aid to the Saudi and UAE-led coalition in Yemen?
- 8 8. Do you support the pursuit of a peace agreement to formally end the Korean War as an essential step
- 9 towards addressing concerns over North Korea's nuclear weapons program?
- 10 9. Do you oppose the Israeli violations of Palestinian rights in the Palestinian Territories, and would you
- 11 support measures to hold Israel accountable for those violations?
- 12 10. Do you support passing laws that would require universal background checks for all gun buyers?

13 **Rationale:**

14 Background for many of the questions can be found in our Social Principles, V. THE POLITICAL
 15 COMMUNITY, *B) Political Responsibility* and VI. THE WORLD COMMUNITY, *C) War and Peace*.
 16 Supporting material can be located at peaceaction.org/platform (Peace Action), peacemich.org (Peace Action
 17 of Michigan), and fcn.org/elections2020 (Friends Committee on National Legislation).

18
 19 **Submitted by:**

20 Rev. Rich Peacock, First United Methodist Church of Troy

21
 22
 23
 24
 25
 26 **R#2020-22**

LC 9

27 **Recognize the Unborn Baby**

28 **Motion:**

29 That the Michigan Area Annual Conference recognizes the unborn baby in the womb as a full human person
 30 from the moment of conception.

31
 32 **Rationale:**

33 Both Scripturally and scientifically the unborn baby is fully human from the moment of conception.

34
 35 Scripturally, Psalm 139:13 tells us that God “knitted me together in my mother’s womb.” In Luke 1, Mary,
 36 pregnant with Jesus, met her cousin Elizabeth, who was pregnant with John the Baptist. Elizabeth told Mary
 37 “As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ear, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.” V. 44.

38
 39 Scientifically, virtually every embryology textbook affirms that conception is the beginning of new life.

- 40 1. “In that fraction of a second when the chromosomes form pairs, the sex of the new child will be
- 41 determined, hereditary characteristics received from each parent will be set, and a new life will have
- 42 begun.” Kaluger, G., and Kaluger, M., *Human Development: The Span of Life*, pp 28-29, (1974).
- 43 2. “Although life is a continuous process, fertilization is a critical landmark because, under ordinary
- 44 circumstances, a new genetically distinct human organism is thereby formed.” *Human Embryology and*
- 45 *Teratology*, (1996).

46
 47 Finally, prochoice academics recognize that the unborn baby is a human being, even though they still support
 48 abortion.

- 49 1. “There is no doubt that from the first moments of its existence an embryo conceived from human sperm
- 50 and egg is a human being.” Peter Singer, Bioethics Professor, Princeton University, and author of *Should*
- 51 *the Baby Live?*, *Practical Ethics*, p 73.

52

- 1 2. "Perhaps the most straightforward relation between you and me on the one hand and every human fetus
2 on the other is this: All are living members of the same species, homo sapiens." David Boonin, PhD,
3 Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado Boulder, A Defense of Abortion, p 20.
4

5 **Submitted by:**

6 Mike Cooper, Gaylord First United Methodist Church

7 Rebecca Cooper, Gaylord First United Methodist Church sadiebuster333@gmail.com
8
9
10
11

12 **R#2020-23**

LC 7

13 **Guidelines for Equitable Compensation Support**
14

15 **Motion:**

16 The Commission on Equitable Compensation moves the Conference Guidelines for Equitable Compensation
17 Support for 2021.

- 18 1. Local congregations shall conduct an annual stewardship campaign. Congregations receiving
19 Equitable Compensation support are expected to participate in ongoing stewardship education and
20 planning through programs such as the Stewardship Academy offered through the United Methodist
21 Foundation of Michigan, the Vital Church Initiative (VCI) or a Paragraph 213 Review as provided in
22 ¶213 of the United Methodist Book of Discipline.
23 2. Local congregations receiving Equitable Compensation grants shall annually counsel with the District
24 Superintendent (DS) concerning levels of pastoral support. Completed applications are to be
25 submitted to the DS for approval.
26 3. Local congregations requesting equitable compensation support shall voucher pastors' travel and
27 business expenses according to the guidelines of the Council on Finance and Administration.
28 4. Local congregations may receive Equitable Compensation support for up to four consecutive years,
29 reducing the original grant amount by 25% each year. Equitable Compensation funds shall not be
30 used to fund more than the Conference minimum salary.
31 5. Congregations receiving Equitable Compensation are encouraged to show progress in full payment of
32 ministry shares.
33 6. Churches receiving or applying for Equitable Compensation that have planned or are planning to
34 enter into building or remodeling projects that require permission of the District Board of Church
35 Location and Building, or which exceed 10% of the total annual budget of the local congregation, shall
36 not proceed with proposed projects and/or related capital campaigns until such time as a plan for
37 ending Equitable Compensation support has been presented and approved by the Commission on
38 Equitable Compensation and the district superintendent. Exceptions to this guideline shall be given
39 greater consideration when proposed projects are related to building accessibility.
40 7. Exceptions to these guidelines may be considered upon recommendation of the Bishop and the
41 Cabinet.
42

- 1 **Submitted by:**
- 2 Michigan Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation
- 3 Nancy Patera, Chair
- 4