

2016 *Book of Discipline*

¶ 34. *Article III.*— The annual conference shall elect clergy and lay delegates to the General Conference and to its jurisdictional or central conference in the manner provided in this section, Articles IV and V. Such elections shall include open nominations from the floor by the annual conference, and delegates shall be elected by a minimum of a simple majority of the ballots cast. The persons first elected up to the number determined by the ratio for representation in the General Conference shall be representatives in that body. Additional delegates shall be elected to complete the number determined by the ratio for representation in the jurisdictional or central conference, who, together with those first elected as above, shall be delegates in the jurisdictional or central conference. The additional delegates to the jurisdictional or central conference shall in the order of their election be the reserve delegates to the General Conference. The annual conference shall also elect reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional or central conference as it may deem desirable. These reserve clergy and lay delegates to the jurisdictional or central conferences may act as reserve delegates to the General Conference when it is evident that not enough reserve delegates are in attendance at the General Conference.

¶ 35. *Article IV.*—The clergy delegates to the General Conference and to the jurisdictional or central conference shall be elected from⁷³ the clergy members in full connection and shall be elected by the clergy members of the annual conference or provisional annual conference who are deacons and elders in full connection, associate members, and those provisional members who have completed all of their educational requirements and local pastors who have completed course of study or an M. Div. degree and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment immediately preceding the election.

¶ 36. *Article V.*—The lay delegates to the General and jurisdictional or central conferences shall be elected by the lay members of the annual conference or provisional annual conference without regard to age, provided such delegates⁷⁵ shall have been professing⁷⁶ members of The United Methodist Church for at least two years next preceding their election, and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election,⁷⁷ and are members thereof within the annual conference electing them at the time of holding the General and jurisdictional or central conferences.

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2.3.10.1 **Nomination of Laity for General & Jurisdictional Conferences**

All laity who meet the criteria set forth in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, 2016, ¶36, Article V, shall be considered as nominees.

- 2.3.10.1.1 **WRITTEN PARAGRAPHS.** The Conference Secretary shall develop a Personal Data Sheet to request contact information and demographic data which the General Conference asks of all delegates, such as gender, race, birthdate, et cetera. This form will be made available to all nominees no later than November 1st of the year prior to the year of election, with the request that it be filled out and returned to the Conference Secretary no later than January 1st of the year of election.

In addition to the Personal Data Sheet each nominee shall be encouraged to provide the Conference Secretary with a written statement of not more than 250 words; if it is longer than 250 words, only the first 250 words will be printed. In addition to the nominee's name, this brief statement may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (1) A personal statement regarding the nominee's qualifications to serve as a delegate to General and/or Jurisdictional Conference including a description of the nominee's service within the United Methodist connection.
- (2) Any other information considered important by the nominee - such as issues the church must address and a clear indication of the nominee's position on each of these issues.

Personal data information shall be assembled with the nominees listed in alphabetical order and a photo of the nominee. This information shall be distributed to all Annual Conference lay members after the nominee approves the completed and edited entry to be published with the *Pre-Conference Booklet*.

This information shall be distributed by the Conference Secretary in a timely manner.

2.3.10.2 **Nomination of Clergy for General & Jurisdictional Conferences**

All ordained ministerial members in full connection who are eligible for election to General & Jurisdictional Conferences (2012 *Book of Discipline* ¶35) are considered as nominees.

- 2.3.10.2.1 Among those designated as clergy nominees, persons wishing to offer themselves for consideration as delegates may submit to the annual conference secretary a written statement of their choosing identifying elements that they believe make them worthy for consideration as delegates and which they wish to have the conference consider in voting. The statements shall not exceed 250 words. These statements, along with a photograph, shall be submitted to the conference by no later than January 1st of the year of election.

This information shall be distributed by the Conference Secretary in a timely manner.

2.3.10.3 **Election of General & Jurisdictional Conference Delegates**

(2016 *Discipline* ¶34-36)

Delegates to the General Conference shall be elected at the session of the Annual Conference **held in the year preceding the session of the General Conference**. Election of both clergy and lay delegates shall be by open ballot without nominating speeches. Throughout the election process, care shall be given to select a slate of delegates who reflect our inclusive nature in regard to theological diversity, race, age, gender, and disability. Delegates should evidence a strong understanding of faith, and a clear sense of being open to the discernment of the Holy Spirit in the work of the church.

- 2.3.10.3.1 A member may vote for as many candidates as he/she chooses so long as he/she does not vote for more than the number to be elected on that ballot. If the number of votes on a ballot exceeds the number to be elected the ballot shall be invalid. The ballot, however, will be considered valid if the elector votes for fewer than the number to be elected.

Organization of General and Jurisdictional Conference Delegation

- 2.3.10.4 The General and Jurisdictional Conference delegation shall meet prior to the adjournment of the Annual Conference session at which they were elected.

Note from the Conference Secretary

Election as a delegate to General and Jurisdictional Conference is both an honor and a responsibility. It is an honor because colleagues in ministry (both clergy and lay) have discerned in the delegates the gifts and graces needed to serve The United Methodist Church by helping it address a wide variety of issues which will affect the future of the denomination around the world. It is a responsibility because delegates have committed themselves to serve in positions of leadership throughout the quadrennium. Throughout this quadrennium there will be times for conferences, meetings, dialogue and debate and also times of prayer, discernment and study.

Questions email conference.secretary@wpaumc.org