



LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR NEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE COMMON WITNESS COALITION

- Affirmation Methodists for LGBTQ Concerns • Black Methodists for Church Renewal •
- Methodist Federation for Social Action •
- National Federation of Asian American United Methodists •
- Native American International Caucus • Reconciling Ministries Network •

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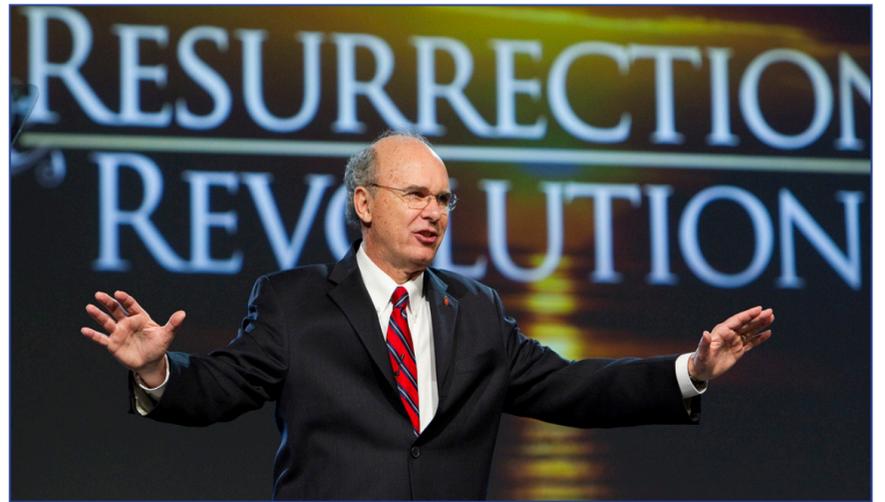
'Making Disciples of Jesus' Emphasis of Laity, Episcopal Addresses

Adapted from United Methodist News Service reports

Five African teenage refugees who survived a massacre and committed to a new life in Christ as they were baptized in a chilly New Hampshire river are part of what United Methodist Bishop Peter Weaver calls a "resurrection revolution." Delivering the Episcopal Address to the 2012 General Conference yesterday, Weaver, who oversees the denomination's New England area, pointed out that New Testament scholar N.T. Wright called the mission of the church the "outworking" of resurrection.

Weaver claimed that description for the baptismal experience in the hip-deep waters of the Contoocook River in New Hampshire. Folks in the town of Contoocook were curious about the spectacle, but they did not know, he said, "the resurrection journey that had brought these teenagers and this church to this place."

Genocidal conflicts between the Hutu and Tutsi tribes had driven the teens from their homes and Methodist churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Then, rebels attacked the refugee camp where they had sought safe haven, killing 166 people, nearly one-fourth of the camp's residents, and wounding hundreds more. "In the wake of this horrendous act, The United Nations resettled many of the survivors, some on the other side of the globe in New Hampshire," the bishop



Bishop Peter Weaver delivers the Episcopal Address at General Conference. "Resurrection defines who we are, our identity," the Bishop said. Photo courtesy UMNS.

said. "There, half a world away from their homes and churches in the Congo, another vital United Methodist congregation...welcomed these immigrants."

Weaver brought four of those teenagers -- Makopa and Byishimo Rugabirwa, Antoine Gisore, and Musafiri Musore -- on stage, where they were greeted with a standing ovation from General Conference participants.

Weaver referred to the holy conversations that would begin later in the day and reminded his audience that despite the legislative nature of the gathering, the real connection among church

members is spiritual, not political.

"Before any of us had a resolution in our hands to vote on, we had a resolution in our hearts to devote ourselves to the living Christ," he said.

Eastertide -- the 50 days between the celebration of the rising of Christ and Pentecost -- is a perfect time to gather by the tidewaters of Tampa Bay, he noted.

"Eastertide is a powerful time but also a time when out of the ocean of God's love comes a surging tide of ris-

ADDRESS, continued on page 11

Where Are All The Young People?

by Ben Roe

Young people need the church--they just don't know it yet. Not a church that puts them in boxes, but a church that assumes "that we have heard things from God that you don't know about yet and we are excited to talk about it." That's Tyler Sit, LGBT outreach coordinator of the World Student Christian Movement and seminarian at Candler School of Theology, addressing the packed Love Your Neighbor Coalition Tabernacle yesterday at lunch.

Young people are also begging for place where they can share their thoughts,



Brad Laurvick. Photo by Ben Roe

check in regularly to be accountable for their growth, and be a part of something bigger than themselves, said Brad Laurvick, a pastor from Rocky Mountain Conference and former president of the United Methodist Student Movement.

Laurvick and Sit spoke about the church and young people, noting that young people

don't want to be put into boxes or captured, but freed to be who they were created to be, Sit said. Laurvick added that young people identify with the "spiritual but not religious mantra," but what they are really saying is that they aren't interested in "church work" but the "work of the church," meaning that "church work" doesn't feed the hungry, clothe the naked, or revitalize people.

Laurvick said that "changing the structure won't clothe the naked; it's just church work, unless that new structure gets out of the way for the work of the church. Study-



Tyler Sit. Photo by Ben Roe

ing the ordained ministry won't feed the hungry because studying ministry is just church work, unless that new understanding of ministry will equip and hold accountable those who do the work of the church in every way, lay and ordained alike.

"Just discussing sexuality," he insisted, "will not revitalize the lives of the bro-

ken; discussing who's in and who's out who's compatible and who's incompatible ... can turn into simply church work, unless we realize that it's the actions that follow, unless we embrace all of God's children just as we have been created."

Religion needs to be culturally redefined, Laurvick said, adding that what young people want is "community and accountability and the chance to contribute to something bigger than yourself" not "the dogma, the institutional 'bs,' and excluding people."

Sit opened the lunch gathering saying, "By the fabulous grace of God, I am a disciple of Jesus Christ!" He noted that, like gardening, "growing something takes work, not just a one-time explosion of effort, but the slow patient hammering of people working together, if young adults are going to be with us." He said that "right now, I'm seeing a lot of young adults who aren't getting a lot of grace from the church." However, he does see young adults being spoken to by God.

Really, what young people want ultimately, Laurvick said, is what John Wesley emphasized: "A grace that meets us, accepts us, and encourages us on--that's timeless teaching."

Ben Roe is the managing editor of the Love Your Neighbor News

Love Your Neighbor Coalition Assists International Delegates

Members of the Love Your Neighbor coalition lived up to their motto April 22 when representatives of the group assisted 17 international delegates who were stranded at Tampa International Airport after weather delays.

Jill A. Warren, president of one of the coalition partners, the Methodist Federation for Social Action, said, "Last night (April 22), we arranged to pick up three Africa University students from the Tampa airport with whom we connected on our pre-General Conference briefing trip to Harare. Their flight was delayed in DC due to weather and they arrived very late -- about 1 a.m."

When members of the Coalition arrived at the airport, they were greeted by 17 other delegates stranded due to flight delays, said Warren. "They had no money, no one to contact, and limited English speaking skills," Warren said. "Somehow their delay wasn't communicated to the Conference or local hospitality team and they were stuck. Luckily we had rented a mini-van and could make a couple of trips to get everyone

safely to their hotel -- finally completing this last-minute hospitality at 2 a.m., along with a drive-thru trip to 24-hr. McDonald's since they hadn't had a meal in 12 hours."

Warren said that this is the kind of work the Coalition is doing -- extending hospitality, making connections, and building relationships -- for peace, justice, and full inclusion of all people.

Love Your Neighbor is a coalition of unofficial United Methodist caucuses that have joined together to promote racial, ethnic and gender equality at the 2012 General Conference. In addition to MFSA, coalition partners include Affirmation, Black Methodists for Church Renewal, International Council of Native Americans, National Federation of Asian American United Methodists and Reconciling Ministries Network. This is the first General Conference in United Methodist history when caucuses seeking racial-ethnic justice have joined with groups favoring gender equality to support the inclusion of all in The United Methodist Church.



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Love Your Neighbor News is produced by the Common Witness Coalition during General Conference 2012.

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Common Witness Videos Available

The Love Your Neighbor Common Witness Coalition is producing a series of daily videos that help share the stories of General Conference 2012.

Visit www.generalconference2012.org/videos.html to see news, inspiration, and more. In addition, volunteers are needed to assist the Coalition video team. If interested, contact Ann Craig at craignewyork@gmail.com.

Calendar of Events

Thursday, April 26

- Love Your Neighbor Lunch Speaker Series

12:00 noon – The Tabernacle – Press Conference

36 Bishops urge removal of ban on gay clergy

Bishop Sharon Zimmerman Rader, Ecumenical Officer of the Council of Bishops; Bishop Don Ott, Correspondent for the Council of Bishops; Dr. Cheryl Anderson, of the Black UMC scholars supporting the bishops' statement; Rev. Dr. Pamela Lightsey, of the Black UMC scholars supporting the bishops' statement.

- Interfaith Worship Service followed by candlelight vigil, UMKR

9:00 - 10:00 p.m. – on the Convention Mall

Led by Christian, Muslim, and Jewish clergy, this service will celebrate the warm and dynamic friendships emerging globally between people of three faiths as supporters of human rights work together to end Israel's occupation of Palestinian land. In the rich tradition of the US Civil Rights movement, the anti-Apartheid struggle, the defense of human rights in Sudan, and the move to ban conflict minerals in the Congo, the push to end Israel's occupation is an urgent focus of Jewish, Christian and Muslim cooperation today. This event is for UMKR volunteers and special guests. Delegates may join the service when the conference adjourns.

Friday, April 27

- Love Your Neighbor Lunch Speaker Series

12:00 noon – The Tabernacle

Lorenza Andrade Smith, Immigration

Last June, the Rev. Lorenza Andrade Smith, an elder in the Southwest Texas Conference, began her new appointment as an advocate for the poor and homeless and for just systems. She sold her car, gave up her home and most of her possessions, took a vow of poverty, and began what she plans will be three years of living on the streets. Although speaking engagements fill much of her calendar, her day-to-day life is among the homeless in communities across the United States. Her base community is among the homeless people living in Austin and San Antonio, Texas.

- UMKR Reception for Delegates

5:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. – Marriott Waterside Hotel

For delegates and invited guests.

Meet and hear Christians from the Holy Land

Descendants of Christ's earliest followers are among the Christians living in the Holy Land today. Like their ancestors, they are enduring persecution and dispossession at

the hands of an occupying power. A number of these indigenous Christians are traveling to Tampa to show their support for the General Conference legislation that would align United Methodist investments with resolutions on Israel/Palestine. They represent thousands of other Palestinian Christians who have signed the Kairos Palestine Document. Each of them has a story to tell that illustrates the impact of Israel's occupation on our faith community in the Holy Land. Delegates are invited to mingle with these Christians and ask questions about their circumstances and the impact of selective divestment on ending the occupation.

For the Love of God and Neighbor

Coalition Worship at Noon on Sunday, April 29.

Straz Center for the Performing Arts,
1010 N. Macinnes Place

Preacher: Rev. Dr. James Cone, author of
"The Cross and the Lynching Tree"

Service streaming live at www.gc12.org



Support the Coalition with your gift today!

More than ever before, the Coalition needs your support to inspire our United Methodist Church to become more grace-filled, just, and loving toward all of God's peoples. There are many ways you can give, including:

- Online via credit card at <http://gc12.org/donate/>
- In Person via credit card or check to Reconciling Ministries Network at the Love Your Neighbor office at the Howard Johnson Hotel (111 W Fortune St, 14th Floor, Tampa, FL 33602).
- Post Mail via check to Reconciling Ministries Network (3801 N Keeler Ave Fl 3, Chicago, IL 60641).

Note: Reconciling Ministries Network is serving as the fiscal agent of the Coalition.

Plumblines are an in-depth analysis of the issues and petitions/resolutions that will be before The United Methodist Church at the 2012 General Conference in Tampa, Florida on April 24 to May 5. They do not cover every petition or resolution for the 2012 General Conference, but are inclusive of the issues positions that the Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA) is advocating for at General Conference. The Plumblines are a gift from MFSA to all United Methodists and our *Love Your Neighbor* Coalition partner organizations. They are hoped to inspire us all as we all strive to discern God's will for our lives and denomination; and, as we work together to make our world, communities and homes examples of Christ-like love and Beloved Community.

Church Restructuring

WHAT'S AT STAKE

The direction and coordination of our General Church ministries for the next ten years; the direction, flow and maintenance of billions of dollars in church resources; and, the diversity and representation of those who will have the authority to make these decisions. It is also felt that the democratic nature of our Wesleyan heritage is also at stake. For even more on UMC restructuring plans, please visit www.mfsa.org.

Options

Two distinct major proposals are being brought for consideration of the 2012 General Conference regarding the restructuring of the Church as it applies to Boards and agencies. They will be dealt with in the General Administration legislative section.

- The first, brought by the Interim Operations Team/Connectional Table (IOT/CT) and the Council of Bishops are what have commonly been referred to as the Call to Action proposals. These petitions are listed under the names John Hopkins (#20980, #20979) dealing with structure and money (respectively) and Jay Brim (#20984) which is implementing legislation (all three will be heretofore referred to as the "CTA proposals"). The CTA proposals consolidate 13 Boards and Agencies into one "Center on Connectional Mission and Ministry" and creates a 15 member Board of Directors and 45 member "General Council on Strategy and Oversight" to oversee the ministries and monies of the United Methodist Church.
- The second, was submitted by Steve Clunn (#21091) on behalf of MFSA, and calls for a reduction of 8 Boards and Agencies to 4 Centers ("Center for Resourcing and Operations, Center for Justice, Reconciliation and Witness, Center for Congregational Development, Center for Global Mission). The four Centers would reduce the number of overall board members currently in half and they would maintain their fiduciary and governance independence, while working together under the guidance of a 67 member "Coordinating Council." While the petition is entitled, "New UM Administrative Order" it will heretofore be referred to as "the MFSA Plan."
- A word about "Plan B." While there has been much hype in recent weeks about people working on a Plan B option as another alternative proposal to the CTA proposals, with less than a month before General Conference, there is still no legislation to look at or examine. Therefore, at this point, there is no Plan B to consider.

At Issue

The CTA Proposals consolidate power in the hands of too few people. They undermine our long standing tradition of diverse representation in leadership from among the broad spectrum and growing global nature of our membership. They give power to a small, non-representative, body to redirect the monies and ministries of the UMC, approved by General Conference, without adequate checks and balances. The CTA Proposals also threaten to undermine the monitoring functions and independent leadership of our Board and Agency structure; which could severely hinder our denominational ability to resource local congregations and regions, and respond to worldwide crisis and situations as they arise. Finally, the CTA Proposals adopt a large church, business model of ministry and evaluative processes that we believe will ultimately hurt many of our rural and urban congregations.

The MFSA Plan attempts to right-size the denomination without adversely impacting our ability to be Christian leaders in the world. It calls for a series of checks and balances that will not undermine the authority of General Conference and our process of holy conferencing. It seeks to expand our levels of diversity in leadership as is reflected in our growth toward a more global church. The MFSA plan also adheres to a set of principles that are both Wesleyan in nature and relevant in addressing our churches mission to make disciples, while allowing us to work on our four focus areas of ministry. Finally, the MFSA Plan calls for a model of ministry and evaluation that takes both quantitative and qualitative into account. This, we believe, will set the stage for congregations to develop more vitality and effectiveness, no matter where they find themselves both regionally and culturally.

How to Use this Special Section

Delegates and visitors to General Conference are encouraged to remove this special section and carry it with them to their legislative committees and plenary sessions.

Analysis and Recommended Action

There will undoubtedly be a number of amendments to any plan or proposal that emerges from the General Administration legislative section. That is why the Love Your Neighbor coalition feels that any plan that emerges and is adopted at General Conference 2012, should meet the following standards and principles:

- Full inclusion, shared leadership and equal participation that represents the diversity and world-wide nature of our Church.
- Broad-based, collaborative, participative decision-making and accountability structures that do the following:
 - Support the UMC in its mission, utilizing the broad definition of disciple-making in ¶122, and moving the UMC "on toward being made perfect in God's love"
 - Maintain and ensure accountability to the entire church through General Conference
 - Strategically put in place governance boards across the general church that involve myriad voices in decision-making and allow them to engage in the missions they have oversight of, rather than concentrating that power in a select few and distancing them so that they are unable to exercise effective oversight
 - Incorporate healthy checks and balances to protect against abuses of power and control
 - Strengthen our connectionalism
 - Address the need for fiduciary and financial controls and separation of roles.
- Full lay leadership development and involvement in the decision-making processes of the denomination, taking advantage of the diverse gifts God has distributed across the

--Inside This Special Section--

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- church
- Social holiness and personal holiness walking hand-in-hand.
- Right-sizing of the general church that takes advantage of opportunities for increased efficiency while not concentrating power or stripping away accountability structures.
- Measurements based on both qualitative and quantitative standards
- An understanding of disciple-making in its broadest sense

The CTA Proposals do not meet these standards and we therefore would ask that delegates defeat these petitions: #20980-GA ("Implementation of Call to Action Proposals," John Hopkins, ADCA pp. 920 - 950), #20979-GA ("Reallocation of Funds by Center for Connectional Mission and Ministry Board," John Hopkins, ADCA pp. 1082 - 1083); #20984-GA ("Program Agency Transition Team - Implement Call to Action Proposal," Jay Brim, ADCA p. 1083); and, two constitutional amendments #20374-CO ("Action Between General Conferences," A. Moses Rathan Kumar, ADCA p. 347) and #20375-CO ("Action on Funding Between General Conferences," A. Moses Rathan Kumar, ADCA p. 347) which enable any "General Conference authorized body" to act on behalf of the general church in regards to the administration of general church boards and funds between General Conferences.

The MFSA Plan was built around these principles and is therefore, we believe, a better plan for the future health and abilities of our United Methodist Church. We ask that delegates approve this legislation: #21091-GA ("New UM Administrative Order," Steve Clunn, ADCA pp. 952-1021).

SUPPORT

Petition 21091-GA ("New UM Administrative Order," Steve Clunn, ADCA pp. 952-1021).

OPPOSE

Petition # 20839-GA ("CT as Restructuring Agent for UMC," Jane Finley, ADCA p. 1043). We urge that delegates defeat this petition as it is a fall-back petition for the CT (Connectional Table) which enables the CT to decide, without any input from General Conference, on what and how church restructuring will occur. Since we already know what the CT plan is – CTA, this could lead to even more detrimental additions into the restructuring process.

Petitions # 20527-GA ("Delegation of Authority," Joe Williams, ADCA p. 914) inserting a new ¶16.16 which gives CT or an equivalent body the legislative authority (for one quadrennium) to see us through structural changes, but the whole process can be rejected at the next General Conference; and, #21083-GA ("Instructions of Connectional Table Pending Passage of Proposal ¶16.16," Joe Williams, ADCA pp. 1083-1084) which upon the approval of a new ¶16.16 then tells the CT exactly how to change the structure. We urge delegates to defeat these petitions as they do not meet our principles and instruct some mergers and shifting of ministry functions without giving any clear picture of how the structure will ultimately look, function and be governed. These petitions essential give a transition team (under the supervision of the CT) the authority to enact an unspecified new organizational structural with very little guidance and restrictions. ■

A More Equitable Worldwide Connection

Options

"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." (Gal 3:28-29, NRSV) To paraphrase verse 28, "There is no longer European or Filipino, there is no longer African or American; there is no longer one United Methodist Church outside the United States and another inside the U.S.; for we are one United Methodist Church in Christ Jesus!"

At Issue

One of the most significant issues that The United Methodist Church must address is the need for a major culture shift regarding the world-wide nature of the denomination. Our church needs to recognize all United Methodists around the world as equal members of one body known as The United Methodist Church and we need to appreciate the vital ministries, cultural differences, and ecumenical and interreligious relationships which exist across the entire denomination. MFSA believes that this cultural shift is long overdue and that now is the time to take tangible, substantive steps.

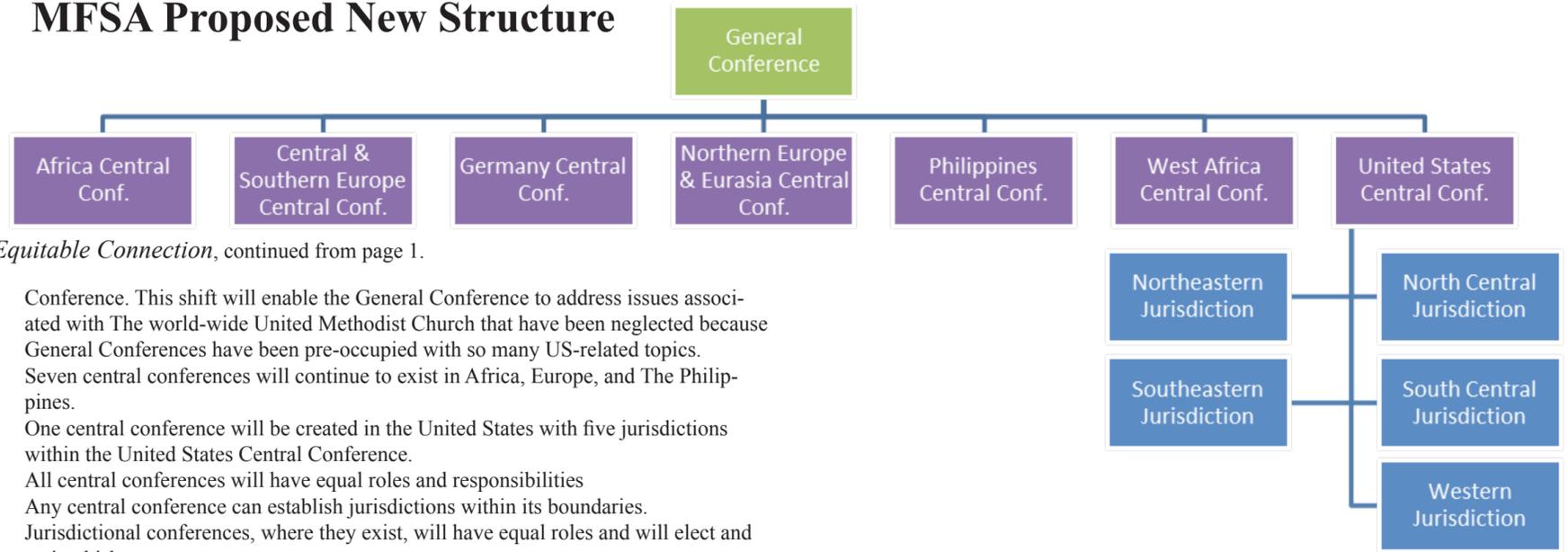
Analysis and Recommended Action

One significant action is to place all annual conferences on an equal footing by creating a central conference in the United States.

Explanation for MFSA's proposal for a central conference in the United States:

- General Conference will still be the body to which the whole church is accountable and it will still handle legislative matters that apply to the entire denomination. Central conferences will deal with legislative matters which apply to a specific central conference and will care for the responsibilities delegated to them by the General

MFSA Proposed New Structure



Equitable Connection, continued from page 1.

Conference. This shift will enable the General Conference to address issues associated with The world-wide United Methodist Church that have been neglected because General Conferences have been pre-occupied with so many US-related topics.

- Seven central conferences will continue to exist in Africa, Europe, and The Philippines.
- One central conference will be created in the United States with five jurisdictions within the United States Central Conference.
- All central conferences will have equal roles and responsibilities
- Any central conference can establish jurisdictions within its boundaries.
- Jurisdictional conferences, where they exist, will have equal roles and will elect and assign bishops.
- Central conferences without jurisdictions will elect and assign bishops.

A second action is to ensure that all United Methodists living in both central and jurisdictional conferences are fairly represented in decision-making settings across the denomination.

- MFSA's Restructuring proposal, "A New UM Administrative Order," includes provisions which support significantly greater levels of participation by members of The United Methodist Church who live in the central conferences.
- MFSA is proposing that 40% of the members of the Coordinating Council and the boards of the Centers in its plan will be members from the central conferences. Currently 36% of the members of The United Methodist Church live outside the United States and that percentage is growing rapidly!
- Please refer to MFSA's "A New UM Administrative Order" for additional details.

Rationale for the changes MFSA has proposed:

- MFSA envisions a new worldwide United Methodist Church, believes that now is the time to move toward full and equal participation by the central conferences in the life of the denomination, and therefore has submitted legislation to the 2012 General Conference to move in that direction.
- One of the most disappointing aspects of the Call To Action proposal is the lack of attention given to our brothers and sisters in Africa, Europe, and The Philippines.
- The Report of the Study Committee on the Worldwide Nature of The United Methodist Church includes recommendations to continue dialogue about the worldwide nature of the denomination and to hopefully submit legislation in 2016 which would establish a central conference in the U.S.
- Although MFSA agrees that further discernment and dialogue are needed, the Study Committee's recommendation to wait until 2016 to introduce constitutional amendments will result in the extension of the central conference – jurisdictional conference distinction until at least 2018.
- During the next six years, membership in the central conferences will assuredly continue to grow and the central conferences will continue to be underrepresented, underserved, and treated unequally.
- MFSA believes that this is a matter of great urgency and that the General Conference needs to act in 2012!

SUPPORT

Petition # 21090-CO, p. 342 (¶16) from MFSA and calls for establishing the US as a Central Conference while allowing for larger Central Conferences to sub-divide into Jurisdictions. This will allow for equanimity across the world-wide connection for our future and begin to correct our US centric and colonialist past.

Petition # 20978-GA, p. 1029 from the Liberian Annual Conference and calls for the elimination of separate US and Central Conference processes for nominations to membership on the Connectional Table and General Agencies (¶705.1). This is a matter of equanimity and eliminates one small piece of the double standards that accompany our colonialist structure and past. In order to make it work, ¶705.1c will also have to be deleted.

OPPOSE

Petition # 20407-FO, p. 886 (¶100) from the Study Committee on the Worldwide Nature of the UMC and calls for establishing global Book of Discipline. This is premature in that we don't yet have an adequate and equal worldwide structure. This is an act of cultural insensitivity and potentially abusive. By creating a global book of discipline first, we have committed an act of colonialism in which Central Conferences are not adequately represented at the discussion and decision making tables of the church and yet will have to live with the undue burden of abiding by policies and procedures that may be culturally inappropriate or damaging to wider cultural relations.

Petition # 20404-GA, p. 952 from the Study Committee on the Worldwide Nature of the UMC and calls for adding wording to ¶701.3, recognizing the "worldwide responsibility" of General Agencies. This is inappropriate, unnecessary and will likely be used by some to call for the further tying up of our valuable boards and agencies in more reporting as to how they break up their resources between US and non-US regions. This would further reduce their resources, time and ability to respond rapidly to the emerging needs of the worldwide church that they are already mandated and committed to serving. ■

Clergy Effectiveness

Options

General Conference will have several different options around clergy effectiveness and issues of ordination that may ultimately have an impact on clergy effectiveness and morale. Some are proposing legislation calling for more punitive measures for clergy perceived as ineffective. These are intended to help weed out ineffective clergy and thereby create a climate for more vital congregations. Others are proposing to focus on strengthening the clergy covenant and the collaborative nature of pastoral ministry, by better reporting processes; more effective use of the current systems we have in place; and, by adding a level of peer accountability designed to focus on improving gifts and skills for ministry.

Our Theological Grounding

"A disciple is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like the teacher (Luke 6:40)." "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching (1 Timothy 5:17)." My friends, we ask you to be thoughtful of your leaders who work hard and tell you how to live for the Lord. Show them great respect and love because of their work. Try to get along with each other (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)."

At Issue

When it comes to petitions from official groups of the denomination, clergy seem to be one of the primary focus points for how we should deal ineffective ministry and church vitality. This has been a highlighted theme in the work produced by the Connectional Table, known as the Call to Action proposals; and, has so greatly impacted the work of the Study of Ministry Commission that many of their proposals are now a part of the implementation process for the Call to Action. Bishops are being asked to take on more direct oversight of clergy. To do so in punitive ways by taking on powers that are currently reserved for the Board of Ordained Ministry and clergy sessions of Annual Conference. Bishops are also being asked to utilize the Administrative leave process, or the appointment process to un-appoint or under-employ clergy they believe to be ineffective, which would essentially drive those clergy out of the ordained ministry.

At question is whether we want to support clergy being in covenant with one another and encourage them into greater effectiveness and accountability; or, do we want to develop a more authoritarian, top down system of clergy evaluations based on a quantitative (not qualitative) matrix system? A secondary question that should be addressed is who are the ones really responsible for church vitality? Is it solely a responsibility of the clergy person, or do we need to look at the contributions lay people in a congregation, the current oversight of the Bishop and District Superintendent, or could there even be issues around physical location and/or cultural forces at work as well? Essentially we must ask if vital ministry is an individual effort or a collaborative and connectional one?

Finally, there is one more question we need to ask ourselves. That is, are we willing to invest our own time, faith, energy, and resources in clergy that are well trained, educated and prepared for the work of leading congregations into vital ministry, rather than being asked to simply do ministry to and for others? Our hearts and minds may answer with a resounding "of course;" but when we look at what is really going on around us in our local congregations, are we willing to walk with our clergy in vital ministries, or merely praise them for the ministries they perform?

Analysis

In theory, the United Methodist Church supports evaluation as a means by which clergy may receive honest feedback, identify growing edges, and plan for development. In practice, much of the evaluation process as it currently exists does not live into this vision. Too often, the annual evaluation by the Staff Parish Relations Committee is either A: lip service compliments to the pastor by members well versed in the importance of being nice and polite or B: an opportunity for anyone with a personal, maybe petty, complaint to express their gripes in destructive rather than constructive ways. Further complications arise because the annual evaluation of the pastor is linked to the SPRC's input into the appointment process where they indicate each year if they wish for the pastor to continue in service to their congregation or be appointed elsewhere. This often creates complex dynamics – churches resistant to change may submit negative evaluations in hopes of having a challenging, forward-leaning pastor moved. Some churches may be most comfortable with a pleasant, everything's OK facade and not be willing to broach the hard discussions of growing edges. At times, the annual clergy evaluation may become victim to power struggles between church leaders and clergy. All of these dynamics point to the unintended result of the current clergy evaluation process which is that evaluations are currently ineffective because too often they are used in punitive fashion, are conducted in an atmosphere of distrust or denial.

Some conferences are moving to include annual congregational evaluations along with clergy evaluations. This offers the opportunity to shift evaluations away from personal impressions of the clergy by SPRC members, to a consideration of how the clergy's gifts and graces work with the congregation's gifts and graces in order to achieve the visions and goals of the congregation. Evaluations may then be conducted within the conversation of how well the clergy and congregation work together. This also places a clergy person's evaluation in context of the community and congregation where she or he is serving. Understanding context provides valuable information to the subtext of an evaluation. One important dynamic to include in the development of congregational evaluations is the impact of the church on their community. In small, rural areas the number of professions of faith, the average worship attendance may not reflect numerical growth, but what is the value of the church for the community – everything from space to meet; to pastoral care available to non-churched; to the immeasurable but valuable message that the United Methodists are not giving up on that community.

One dynamic missing from clergy evaluation is peer evaluation. SPRC's evaluate, District Superintendents supervise, but once full members, colleagues do not currently have a means of providing ongoing nurture, support and evaluation. Proposed legislation would call for the development of clergy peer groups for the purposes of collegial support. Such groups can be rich with the exchange of ideas, the sharing of wisdom and

Effectiveness, continued on page 5.

Effectiveness, continued from page 4.

experience, safe places to struggle with challenges, where shepherds gather to shepherd each other. Evaluations from colleagues with whom clergy have healthy, honest relationships can offer great potential for increasing self-awareness and support for addressing growing edges. It is important that such peer groups not include any member with supervisory authority over any other member within the particular group – senior pastors would not be in a group with their associate pastor(s), members of cabinets and extended cabinets would not be in groups with clergy appointed within their conference. By necessity, the inclusion of a supervisory person within a peer group compromises the genuineness of the sharing and relationships within the group. This added component of evaluation closes some of the gaps in the current evaluative process and brings the process into a full circle of feedback. Adding peer evaluations would also help bring balance to the power inequities which exist between bishops and appointed clergy.

Finally, in a time when clergy effectiveness is being looked at as one of the crucial elements in the future vitality of our congregations and denomination as a whole, it is surprising to see how many pieces of legislation are attempting to devalue seminary education and the ordination process toward full membership. If we value highly competent and trained clergy, who see themselves gifted for the calling of ordained ministry, why would we devalue the process and tools that work together to achieve these results? In attempts to simplify the ordination process and make ministry more accessible to all, our Board of Higher Education and Ministry has missed a wonderful opportunity to encourage elevated skill levels; support and strengthen the role of ordained Deacons; and initiate ways to make the clergy covenant that exists in Annual Conferences more effective in terms of accountability and support. In the case of the Study on Ministry Commission, they actually may have undermined all of these areas. It is crucial that we do not demoralize this integral part of the ministry of our church; those called to ordination as Deacons or Elders.

SUPPORT

We ask for a high level of support for this petition:

20803 -MH-¶350.1: pg.1436, by Steve Clunn for Methodist Federation for Social Action, Strengthens the existing clergy evaluation processes and reporting, adds a peer evaluation process, and is designed to promote greater support and collaboration on every level of ministry effectiveness and evaluations.

ALSO SUPPORT:

20471-MH-¶32: pg.1395, by Judith Reedy for North Texas Annual Conference, Corrects Retired Local Pastor Status in terms of voting rights approved at 2008 General Conference.

20078-MH-¶318.3:pg.1407, by Kim Cape, for General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Allows for students to be appointed as Local Pastors by their home Annual Conference while serving in another Annual Conference.

20761-MH-¶322:pg.1408, by Delia Estrada, Corpus Christi, Texas, Eliminates the age restriction (must be 40) for Associate members of Annual Conference.

20760-MH-¶324.5:pg.1411, by Delia Estrada, Corpus Christi, Texas, Eliminates the age restriction (must be 35) for Deacons.

20762-MH-¶324.6:pg.1411, by Delia Estrada, Corpus Christi, Texas, Eliminates the age restriction (must be 40) for Local Pastors to become provisional members of Annual Conference.

20080-MH-¶326.3:pg.14137, by Kim Cape, for General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Clarifies the accountability of the provisional member with their home Annual Conference.

20911-MH-¶328:pg.1415, by Rebekah Miles, Fort Worth, Texas, Gives sacramental authority to Deacons under appointment where an elder is not available. This would greatly benefit the ministry of our school chaplains and others.

20514-MH-¶346.1:pg.1435, by Steven Hermes for Yellowstone Annual Conference, Allows clergy under appointment in another Annual Conference to have rights of voting and serving on boards within the conference they are serving, upon Board of Ordained Ministry and Clergy session approval and provided they forego those rights in their home conference while holding during that time. Helps congregations to be represented by both clergy and laity.

20468-MH-¶357:pg.1439, by Multiple, Changes “incapacity leave” to “medical leave” and eliminates implied derogatory connotations.

20311-MH-¶524:pg.1452, by Al Gwinn for Study of Ministry Commission, Has the Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy meeting annually instead of every two years to allow for more effective evaluations of our Episcopal leaders.

OPPOSE

We ask for a high level of opposition to these:

20308-MH-¶300:pg.1400, by Al Gwinn for Study of Ministry Commission, does away with guaranteed appointment and vocational protection for full clergy members of Annual Conference... Implements Call to Action punitive measures.

20835-MH-¶315.3, 319 & 332:pg.1406, by Lonnie Brooks, Anchorage, Alaska, Allows for Associate Members to receive Elders orders without the previous qualification of a seminary education. This will make a full theological education optional at all levels of ministry and impact both our clergy preparedness and the viability of some of our United Methodist schools.

20285-MH-¶321:pg.1408, by Al Gwinn, for Study of Ministry Commission, Takes away the security of appointment and therefore employment of Associate and Affiliate Members of the clergy by stripping away the guaranteed appoint for clergy in good standing.

20303 & 20304 -MH-¶337 & ¶338:pg.1428, 1429, by Al Gwinn, for Study of Ministry Commission, Takes away the security of appointment and therefore employment of Elders by stripping away the guaranteed appoint for clergy in good standing.

ALSO OPPOSE:

20277-MH-¶141.-G: pg.1395, by Al Gwinn for Study of Ministry Commission, deletes commissioning process

206914-MH-¶271-G: pg.1396, by Julie Love, Crestwood, KY, deletes the role of the District Board of Ordained Ministry in overseeing the work of a Certified Lay Minister and instead puts their supervision in the hands of the Board of Laity.

20286, 20291, 20295, 20296, & 20301-MH-¶300:pg.1399, by Al Gwinn for Study of Ministry Commission, deletes the current ordination two-step ordination process and devalues the level of full clergy member of Annual Conference.

20278-MH-¶301.2: pg.1401, by Al Gwinn for Study of Ministry Commission, changes “ordained ministers” to “set-apart ministers, ordained and licensed.” This continues the devaluation of the ordination process in serving our churches.

20279-MH-¶303.2: pg.1401, by Al Gwinn for Study of Ministry Commission, confusing language between the responsibilities of full clergy members of an Annual Conference and what has traditionally been the role of the ordained Deacon. This helps to set the stage for later recommendations doing away with the ordination of Deacons.

20282-MH-¶311.1d: pg.1403, by Al Gwinn for Study of Ministry Commission, changes language around the certification process for candidates to ordained ministry as part of the dissolution of the two-step ordination process... devaluing full clergy membership in the Annual Conference.

20660-MH-¶316.6: pg.1407, by Michael Harriott, for Greater New Jersey Annual Conference, Gives full-time and part-time Local Pastors the right to vote on constitutional amendments, a right currently reserved for Elders. Local pastors can be under appointment upon completion of the licensing program (in some cases as little as two weeks) and with next to no training in UM Church polity. This is inadvisable.

20079-MH-¶316.5: pg.1408, by Kim Cape, for General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Gives Local Pastors who have completed the Course of Study to serve on the District or Conference Boards of Ordained Ministry. Currently Elders are the only clergy who have the right to vote on matters of clergy character, qualifications, status and ordination. This would contradict that practice by giving Local Pastors voice and vote on the very Boards that deal with those matters.

20287-MH-¶324: pg.1409, by Al Gwinn, for Study of Ministry Commission, Reducing the steps of ordination to one. Full Ordained Members of the Annual Conference will get a certificate from the Bishop and Chair of BOM.

20288-MH-¶325: pg.1412, by Al Gwinn, for Study of Ministry Commission, Deletes the paragraph and eliminates the Commissioning process for Candidates for ministry.

20313-MH-¶335: pg.1425, by Bishop Larry Goodpaster, for Council of Bishops, This dictates study material for Elders legislatively, without involving our University Senate or in consultation with any of our United Methodist School professionals.

20174-MH-¶361: pg.1444, by Kim Cape, for Board of Ordained Ministry, would allow a Bishop to usurp the Board of Ordained Ministry process in removing a clergy person.

20175-MH-¶362: pg.1446, by Kim Cape, for Board of Ordained Ministry, Severely limits the advocacy process for a clergy person who is in under the complaint process.

For many of the reasons stated above: 20292-MH-¶329:pg.1415, 20293-MH-¶330:pg.1416, 20453-MH-¶330:pg.1417, 20082-MH-¶331:pg.1418, 20294-MH-¶331:pg.1421, 20083-MH-¶331.8:pg.1422, 20297-MH-¶332:pg.1422, 20298-MH-¶333:pg.1423, 20299-MH-¶334:pg.1423, 20804-MH-¶334.3:pg.1424, 20300-MH-¶335:pg.1424, 20454-MH-¶335:pg.1425, 20766-MH-¶335.3b:pg.1427, 20302-MH-¶336:pg.1427, 20305-MH-¶342:pg.1432, 20306-MH-¶344:pg.1433, 20307-MH-¶349:pg.1436, 20591-MH-¶354:pg.1437, 20090-MH-¶354.3:pg.1438, 20567-MH-¶362.3:pg.1449, 20310-MH-¶364:pg.1451, 20623-MH-¶634.4d:pg.1453. ■

Death Penalty

Options

Delegates will have six pieces of legislation related to the death penalty before them at General Conference all five of which seek to change the existing, historic support for eradication of the death penalty.

Our Theological Grounding

“When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, ‘Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to cast a stone (John 8:7).’”

At Issue

At issue is whether the United Methodist Church should continue and strengthen its commitment to abolish the death penalty and further work with governments and legislative officials for a moratorium on Capital Punishment OR amend the current disciplinary statement on opposing the death penalty to state that United Methodists do not oppose the death penalty.

Analysis

These petitions misuse Scripture and Wesley’s writings to suggest that Jesus and Wesley would both affirm the death penalty as a means to achieve justice. Jesus clearly repudiates vengeance as a method of behavioral modification. Several scriptural passages reveal the fact that Jesus had several opportunities to uphold the practice of the death penalty and did not. Jesus intentionally reinterpreted the Old Testament in such a way that upholds the value of all life, including those previously sentenced to die under Old Testament law.

The United Methodist Church has stood against capital punishment since 1956. The 2004 Book of Discipline powerfully states, “We believe the death penalty denies the power of Christ to redeem, restore, and transform all human beings.” Nowhere in Scripture do we find Jesus favoring the death penalty as a means to achieve justice. This is the ground on which the United Methodist Church has stood for the last 56 years in speaking out against capital punishment. It is on this ground that we should remain. For more information <http://www.pfadp.org/>

OPPOSE

20604-CA-¶164.G-G: pg.193, by M. Tooley, Fairfax, VA, deletes existing opposition to the death penalty

20926-CA-¶164.G-G: pg. 194, by J. Carlsen, Arcadia, FL, misapplies Christian and Wesleyan teaching on mercy and reconciliation to include death penalty; limits GBCS advocacy for abolition of death penalty

20948-CA-¶R5031-G: pg. 216, by J. Carlsen, Arcadia, FL, misapplies Christian and Wesleyan teaching on mercy and reconciliation to include death penalty; limits GBCS advocacy for abolition of death penalty

20950-CA-¶R5035-G: pg. 217 by J. Carlsen, Arcadia, FL, deletes resolution 5035 “In Opposition to Capital Punishment”

20951-CA-¶5036-G: pg. 217, by J. Carlsen, Arcadia, FL, deletes existing resolution 5036 “Seek Moratorium on Capital Punishment”

20952-CA-¶R5037: pg. 217, by J. Carlsen, Arcadia, FL, deletes existing resolution 5037 “Texas Death Penalty” ■

Peace in Palestine / Israel

Options

Recognizing that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the world's major sources of instability, that the conditions of occupation and occupying are detrimental to both Palestinians and Israelis, and that the UMC support of US businesses directly connected to this conflict is both against current UMC policy and aids the continuing occupation declared illegal by the United Nations, MFSA recommends that GC delegates support Petition # 21071 that calls for aligning UMC investments with UMC resolution to oppose Israeli Settlements by divestment from three companies (Motorola, Hewlett-Packard and Caterpillar) with which good faith engagement has occurred and born no fruit. Petition #2107 was submitted by the General Board of Church and Society, the General Board of Global Ministry and six Annual Conferences and is supported by Black Methodists for Church Renewal, The Hispanic/Latino Caucus of the UMC and the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico.

Several petitions submitted to promote investment in Palestinian businesses while appealing at first glance are both premature and misleading as long as occupying forces prevent movement of supplies and destroy current investment projects. Thus, MFSA recommends opposing petitions seeking only investment. According to the World Bank, "As long as access and movement restrictions are in place, the majority of the West Bank remains to a large degree inaccessible for Palestinian economic investment...." ("The World Bank, "The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank", October 23, 2008, page 34.)

At Issue

At issue is how the United Methodist Church can best use its moral authority and investments to promote justice, peace and security for Palestinians and Israelis alike.

Analysis

The UMC as stated in The Book of Resolutions affirms and supports Israel's right to exist within secure borders, the rights of Palestinians to self-determination and formation of a viable state, and a just solution for Palestinian refugees. Affirmed at the 2008 GC, resolution 6073 says, "The UMC opposes continued military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, the confiscation of Palestinians land and water resources, the destruction of Palestinian homes, the continued building of illegal Jewish settlements and any vision of a [Greater Israel] that includes the occupied territories and the whole of Jerusalem and its surroundings." Although a number of peace plans have been initiated, 45 years of military occupation and the ongoing confiscation of more land for illegal settlements in violation of UN resolutions continue unabated. Resources that might be used for needed domestic programs in Israel are diverted instead to maintain the occupation of Palestine and the militarization of Israeli society.

An urgent humanitarian crisis exists among the Palestinian people, especially in Gaza, due to malnutrition, water shortages, extreme poverty, the lack of access to health care, the inability to farm agricultural land, and collective punishment such as cutting off electricity and limiting travel between Palestinian communities. Violence has increased and according to the Israeli Human Rights group B'Tselem, between September 2000 and December 2011, 6,995 Palestinians were killed by Israelis and 662 Israelis have been killed by Palestinians. (Summary of statistical reports found at <http://old.btselem.org/statistics/english/>.)

We acknowledge and lament the pain and suffering of both peoples and cannot, in sound Christian conscience, be silent in the face of that suffering nor financially profit from the manufacturing of products which support such suffering. UMC policy "prohibits investment in enterprises that are so morally reprehensible that investment in these companies is not tolerated by the church." [Book of Resolutions, 2004, # 213.1, "Avoidance by Divestment"] Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian land and accompanying actions is morally reprehensible and companies that support this process should not be in our denomination's portfolios.

SUPPORT

Petition # 21071-FA-R9999-G, P 856 from GBCS calls for aligning UMC investments with UMC resolution to oppose Israeli Settlements by divestment from three companies (Motorola, Hewlett-Packard and Caterpillar) with which good faith engagement has occurred and born no fruit.

Petition # 20138-CA-R6073-G, P.222, is the GBCS proposed update of current resolution #6073 Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land passed in 2004.

Petition # 20865-CA-R9999-G, P. 256, by D. Lewis, Pasadena, CA, calls for the GC to support at all levels of the church efforts "to (engage) in ecumenical and interfaith dialogue leading to achieving common goals relating to Israel/Palestine."

Petition # 21064-CA-R9999-G, P. 258, by E.K. Sander, Newburgh, IN, proposes the UMC work against anti-Semitism through teaching and interfaith activities. An amendment to this petition might add the equal need to work against anti-Muslim and anti-Arab sentiments that have increased during the past decade.

Petition # 21072-FA-R9999-G, P. 857, proposes a broader call for divestment from "corporations whose businesses and products are supporting the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land." While MFSA supports this petition, it is more likely that the previous petition #21071 would pass before this current petition would pass.

OPPOSE

Petition # 20528-CA-R9999-G, P. 254, by D. Irvin, Peoria, AZ, calls for theological and political assumptions not in concert with existing UM mainstream perspectives by calling for UMC support of "greater Israel" (Israeli, West Bank Gaza, Jordan, and parts of Syria and Lebanon) and

Petition # 20640-CA-R6073-G, P. 224, by S. Holmes, "Israeli Settlements" removes all calls for justice and opposition to Jewish Israeli-only settlements in the Palestinian West Bank and the harmful repercussions these settlements have on Palestinian communities from Resolution 6073 Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land, which was passed by the GC 2004 and readopted in 2008.

Petition # 21068-CA-R6073-G, P. 226, by F & R Drewry, The Villages, FL, "Delete Resolution" calls for the deletion of Resolution 6073 Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land in its entirety.

Petition # 20641-CA-R6074-G, P.226, by S. Holmes, Warren, IN, removes the majority of rational for resolution 6074. United Nations Resolutions on the Israel-Palestine Conflict (passed by the GC in 2008) and removes the UM calls for the U.S. government to accept U.N. Security Council resolutions pertaining to the conflict.

Petition # 20877-CA-R6074-G, P.227, by S Purnell, Parsons, WV, "Israeli Borders" removes the call upon Israeli specifically to abide by and uphold UN resolutions, International Court of Justice rulings and international law, while inserting text supporting the unilateral establishment of international borders and inaccurately attributing support for religious liberty of Palestinians to the government of Israel which routinely denies the right of Palestinian Christians and Muslims to pray at their holy sites in Jerusalem.

Petition # 21065-CA-R9999-G, P. 259, by J. Lomperis, While primarily concerning the Palestinian political party Hamas, this resolution calls solely on the Palestinian National Authority to seek peaceful resolutions through direct negotiations with Israeli without calling on the Israeli government to do the same with the Palestinian National Authority.

Petition # 21066-CA-R9999-G, P. 227, by C. Preston, Erie, PA, proposes changes to 6074. United Nations Resolutions on the Israel- Palestine Conflict that refer to the resolution's accurate statements about the location of Jewish-only settlements and that Israeli security barrier or wall is build on occupied Palestinian land.

Petition # 21067-CA-R9999-G, P.227, by C Preston, Erie, PA, proposes removal of reference to UMC resolution #6073 Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land.

Petition # 21069-CA-R9999-G, P. 259, by M. Hughes, Morganfield, KY, while upholding the agreed to statement about the UMC supporting the right of Israeli to exist this petition supports Jerusalem as the capital of Israeli without consideration to the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people who also view Jerusalem as their capital.

Petition # 21073-FA-R9999-G, P 861, by J. Lomperis, Arlington, VA, Proposes a new resolution to oppose divestment from Israel. There is currently no call to divest from Israel. The current call for aligning UMC investment with UMC resolutions call for the vestment from international companies supporting an occupation.

Petition # 21074-FA-R9999-G, P. 857, by D. Mitchell, Mason, OH, The petition's title opposes an action MFSA supports and is an action not actually called for in the text of the petition. Regardless of the UMC's policy on economic engagement establishing the relationships articulated in the petition are acceptable.

LEARN MORE: www.kairosresponse.org/ ■

Economic Justice

Options

Delegates to GC2012 will be voting on petitions that affect economic justice for individuals, communities and countries including issues of; food justice, public indebtedness, gambling, health care as a basic human need, tobacco marketing, financial support for domestic issues, worker rights, union votes, excessive litigation, support for military personnel/veterans, domestic spending, US taxation, criminalization as form of economic control, caring for victims of crime, economic exploitation, and creating a worldwide peace economy.

At Issue

Whether the UMC will speak prophetically and lead practically in creating economic justice for all people regardless of human difference of age, ethnicity, employment status, income/asset status nationality, military service status or residency.

Analysis

Jesus taught more about the uses of money than any other subject in our Christian scripture. As United Methodists, we use tradition, experience and reason to supplement our understanding of scripture and guide our actions as Christ's disciples in the world.

We know from scripture that the love of money is the root of all evil and we have learned that the economic systems in which money is loved leads to oppression. The love of justice and mercy is God's charge to us to create such a world. As United Methodists throughout our world we oppose all systems of oppression, including those with economic effects rooted in other areas of injustice such as ageism, able-ism, economic status, employment status, heterosexism, incarceration, nationalism, racism, or sexism.

The following endorsements reflect our support for legislation that affects all United Methodists in creating economic justice and our opposition to legislation that is specifically US-centric.

SUPPORT

¶160, **Petition 202142-CA-¶160.G-G**: pg.188, by GBCS to change title from Food Safety to Food Justice

¶160, **Petition 20447-CA-¶160.G-G**: pg. 188, by Germany Central Conference to assure food safety includes labeling of genetically altered foods

¶163, **Petition 20143-CA-¶163-G**: pg. 189, by GBCS to guard against abusive lending practices

SUPPORT, CONTINUED:

¶163, **Petition 20639-CA-¶163.G-G**, pg.191, by D Berlin, Manheim, PA; strengthen opposition to gambling where already exists, change definition of gambling to form of theft

¶164, **Petition 20927-CA-¶164-G**, pg. 191, by J. Carlsen, Arcadia, FL; add new language to oppose excessive civil litigation as form of greed and control. Church to set up structures for arbitration/mediation for members.

¶164, **Petition 20716-CA-¶164.I-G**, pg. 95, by Iowa Annual Conference; add language to assure adequate resources for military personnel/veterans' physical and mental health needs.

Economic, continued from page 6.

¶165, **Petition 20792-CA-¶165.B-G**, pg. 195, by B. Marden, Chemsford, MA; refrain from punitive & promote restorative justice

R4021, Petition 20156-CA-R4021-G, pg. 209, by GBCS; broadens tobacco marketing beyond one named company

R9999, Petition 20053-C-R9999-G, pg. 243, by GBGM Women's Division; economic justice and demonization of communities of color – enforce/protect international human rights law, stop profiling, raids and wrongful imprisonment, investigate & end abuses in prisons, enable people to work

R9999, Petition 20056-CA-R999, pg. 248, by GBGM Women's Division; compassion as basis for understanding lack of economic prosperity for some rather than demonizing others, particularly communities of color

R9999, Petition 20128-CA-R9999, by GBCS; caring for victims of crime to include financial assistance

R999, Petition 20140-CA-R9999-G, by GBCS; enabling financial support for domestic programs

R9999, Petition 20144-CA-R9999-G, by GBCS; reducing economic exploitation applying to banking and credit industries

R9999, Petition 20148-CA-R9999-G, by GBCS; creating just tax structures

R9999, Petition 20798-CA-R9999-G; by R. Peacock, Waterford, MI; create a worldwide peace economy

OPPOSE

¶163, **Petition 20474-CA-¶163-G**: pg.189, by Alabama-West Florida Conference; add to the Social Principles in the Book of Discipline prohibition on public indebtedness. U.S-centric

The Ways that Make for Peace

Options

Delegates to GC2012 will be voting on petitions that set forth a vision of peace with justice, seek a peaceful solution and withdrawal of US Troops from Afghanistan, support safe nuclear programs and oppose nuclear weapons, urge ending the US Embargo of Cuba, seek programs that help us better understand our Muslim brothers and sisters, and call for peacemaking as a priority for the United Methodist Church. Tensions with Iran have increased in recent months and delegates may want to add Iran to other global areas in which we seek negotiations rather than military intervention.

At Issue

At issue is whether the UMC will speak a prophetic word of peace to our nation and the world or follow the path of supporting violence as a solution to global confrontations.

Analysis

Jesus said, "They that live by the sword will die by the sword." As followers of Jesus we can never give our blessing to war. No matter how much reason tells us that in any given situation war is the lesser evil of choices before us, we cannot give our blessing. In an age when many nations possess weapons of mass destruction that can end all human life on the planet, war has become as obsolete as the dinosaurs. It can no longer be considered as a valid means of resolving conflict. We reject war as an instrument of national foreign policy and especially reject preemptive first strikes.

UMC bishops have stated that "Peace is not simply the absence of war, a nuclear stalemate or combination of uneasy cease-fires. It is that emerging dynamic reality envisioned by prophets where spears and swords give way to implements of peace (Isaiah 2:1-4); where historic antagonists dwell together in trust (Isaiah 11:4-11); and where righteousness and justice prevail. There will be no peace with justice until unselfish and informed life is structured into political processes and international arrangements" (Bishops Call for Peace and the Self-Development of Peoples). ADOPTED 1984, AMENDED AND READOPTED 2000.

More than 70 United Methodist bishops signed a letter Nov. 10, 2009 asking the president to withdraw troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2010. The UMC continues to have concern about using nuclear technology without taking sufficient consideration of safety measures in the production, handling and disposal processes. We also continue to oppose the use of nuclear technology for the production of weapons.

Our vision is a world in which people live together in peace and with mutual respect. To that end we especially encourage support of the petitions urging UMC local congregations, Annual Conferences and boards and agencies to put resources into the study and visioning of peacemaking.

SUPPORT

Peacemaking

Petition #20139-CA-R6094, p. 229, from GBCS, The UMC and Peace, Amends and updates Resolution No 6094 passed in 2004 and up for renewal. It covers disarmament, support for democracy and freedom with liberation and economic justice in other countries, support for the United Nations as a place for international justice.

Petition #20485-CA-R6091G, p. 228, from CalPac AC adds implementation language to A Call for Peacemaking passed in 2008.

Petition #20451-CA-Par165.C-G, p. 195. German Central Conference adds language to focus on a just peace rooted in the Social Principles rather than focusing on responding to threats of war or wars in progress.

Petition #20486-CA-NonDis-G, p. 198, A Call for Peacemaking from Cal-Pac Annual Conference seeks to implement a 2008 petition calling for peacemaking by requiring the Council of Bishops and Connectional Table to report peacemaking activities and recommend further activities that lead to peace.

Petition #20902-CA-NonDis-G, p. 198, Gods' Renewed Creation: Call to Hope and Action, from Council of Bishops calls for continued study and action on poverty and disease, environmental degradation and the proliferation of weapons and violence.

Petition 20227-CA-R6122-G, p. 238, from GBGM, Prohibition of Arms Sales and

¶163, **Petition 20669-CA-¶163-G**:pg. 190, by G. Light, Greensboro, NC; deletes existing language supporting collective bargaining for public employees, and redefines Economic Community social principles to apply only to private sector; US-centric

¶163, **Petition 20520-CA-¶163.B**:pg.190, by R. Haberstock, Charlotte, NC; deletes existing language supporting collective bargaining for public employees; US-centric

¶163, **Petition 20521-CA-¶163.C**: pg. 190, by R. Haberstock, Charlotte, NC; changes existing language for "living wage" to "competitive wage", deletes existing language for job development by government; US-centric

¶163, **Petition 20606-CA-¶163.E-G**:pg.190, by M. Tooley, Fairfax, VA; highlights free market as source of reducing poverty, deletes existing language referencing affects of economic injustice, environmental injustice, conflicts and war.

¶164 **Petition 20463-CA-¶164.A-G**: pg.192, by J. Derso, Roswell, GA; deletes existing language for health care as basic freedom

¶164, **Petition 20700-CA-¶164.A-G**: pg.192, by B. Edwards, Boerne, TX; deletes existing support for basic freedoms of adequate food, clothing, shelter, education and health care

R4111, Petition 20741-CA-R4111, pg. 210, by S. Smalling, Jasper, TN; eliminates existing language supporting federal domestic spending, US-centric

R4112, Petition 20736-CA-R4112, pg. 210, by S. Smalling, Jasper, TN; disband Annual Conference State Taxation Task Forces, US-centric

R4135, Petition 20737-CA-R4135, pg. 211, by S. Smalling, Jasper, TN; remove support for "card check" option in union votes, US-centric

R4135, Petition 20800-CA-R4135, pg. 211 by T. Golden, Wichita Falls, TX, USA; deletes existing language empowering workers to organize to improve conditions; US-centric ■

Transfers, based on US being lead seller of arms globally and arms used in conflicts deeply affecting civilians this updates resolution passed in 2004.

Nuclear Safety

Petition #20145-CA-R1003-G, p. 203, Nuclear Safety in the USA, from GBCS, provides a list of ways to support nuclear technology development safely and with concern for the environment and to oppose the use of nuclear weapons. Also to provide nuclear experts to assist annual conferences to understand and respond to nuclear waste and safety concerns in their areas.

Petition #20020-CA-R6094-G, p. 229, from Methodist United for Peace and Justice, Evil of Nuclear Weapons, adds paragraph declaring nuclear weapons "morally corrupt and spiritually bankrupt" to revision of Resolution 6094 proposed by GBCS.

Petition #20866-CA-R6117-G, p. 236, from Cal-Pac AC, Saying No to Nuclear Weapons, Amends and updates Resolution on opposing the development and use of any nuclear weapons.

Understanding and Global Justice

Petition #20225-CA-R6045-G, p. 220, US-China Political Relations, from GBGM, recommends ways to improve US-China Political Relations.

Petition #20333-CA-R6061-G, p. 221, Our Muslim Neighbors, from GCCUIC, urges continued dialogue between Christians and Muslims worldwide.

Petition 20224-CA-R5090-G, p. 219, Justice for Cuban Prisoners, from GBGM, responds to five Cuban prisoners held in US Federal prisons and urges GC recommend to government agencies that family be allowed to visit them.

Petition #20226-CA-R6069-G, p. 221, from GBGM, asks the UMC to petition President and Congress to lift economic embargo against Cuba.

Petition #20051-CA-R999-G, p. 239, from GBGM-WD, Seeking Peace in Afghanistan, Urges all UM members call for redirection of military spending to meet human needs, supports peace education, support for veterans and Afgan civilians facing PTSD, opposes use of so-called war on terror to justify racial profiling, calls for women to be involved equally in negotiations for peace in Afghanistan and to end impunity for those who commit violence against women.

Petition #20799-CA-R9999-G, p. 255, from G. Peacock, End War in Afghanistan, supports withdrawal of troops by end of 2012, advocates UN insure universal human rights, advocates regional diplomacy, research to discern facts that led to war, invites sharing resolution with congregations.

OPPOSE

Oppose petitions from IRD and others supporting Just War, War as Inevitable and Preemptive Strikes

Petition #20792-CA-Par.164.I.G, p. 195, Promoting Restorative Justice, from Bonnie Marden NE Conference, Well-intentioned but leaves responsibility for peace-building to powerful nations and opposes "punitive measures" presumably such as divestment, boycotts, protests and other successful tactics of minorities saying they are often ineffective. This is a false premise, ignores success of South Africa boycott, stopping US War in Viet Nam and hundreds of others.

Petition # 20007-CA-Par.165.C-G, P. 195, Restore Just War Options, from Lonnie Brooks, AK, Seeks to delete language passed at GC 2008 that rejects Just War as an instrument of national policy and supports unilateral and preemptive strikes. We support leaving the original paragraph as passed in 2008.

Petition #20608-CA.C-G, p. 165, War and Peace, from IRD seeks to justify war as an inevitable result of being fallen people.

Petition #20625-CA-Par.165.C-G, P. 197, Support Moral Framework for National Defense from IRD encourages government to protect citizens by National Defense rather than peace building.

Petition #20630-CA-Par. 165, C-G, p. 197, Defense from Invasion, from IRD, supports preemptive strikes. ■

Full Inclusion: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) People

Options

General Conference delegates in Tampa will prayerfully consider an array of legislation that asks the United Methodist Church to fulfill a core value of the church, full inclusion of all people and respect the diversity of God's humanity. Each General Conference support for full inclusion has grown. The Holy Spirit is leading the church toward full inclusion as we vote to:

- End the 40 years in the wilderness where some United Methodists are deemed "incompatible with Christian teaching;" John 3:16 says God saves all who believe.
- Stop the abuse of pastoral authority by those who would deny membership based on a person's sexual orientation rather than faith in Jesus.
- Affirm our clergy who are gay or lesbian and are effectively serving our churches, and announce to candidates who are called and qualified that God has opened the door.
- Refuse to punish clergy who follow their ordination vows to minister to all who seek the ministry of the church at weddings and unions for loving same-gender couples.
- Refuse to ban another group of United Methodists—this time transgender people—some of whom have served as effective clergy for decades.
- Drop the funding ban that is being used to stifle healthy discussions about accepting and respecting our LGBT sons and daughters, church members and community members.

At Issue

For over 40 years, United Methodist policies have told gay and lesbian Christians that God does not love them unless they change who they are. This has led the UMC down a "slippery slope" of judgmental policies. In 1972, the church said gay and lesbian people were "incompatible with Christian teaching." Today we have bans, exclusions, chargeable offenses, trials and a General Conference burdened with a climate of legalism.

Decades of increasing legalism has driven many young people away. The evangelically based Barna Research group reports that 84% of young Christians say that churches are "hypocritical" and "too judgmental" toward gay people. Young people know that anti-LGBT policies cause concrete harms as they watch their friends struggle and sometimes choose suicide because they have been told that God does not love them.

Faith-based condemnations sow seeds of violence seen in bullying, suicide, incarceration, rape, murder and execution of people who are or are perceived to be LGBT. Research shows that murders of LGBT people are often marked by viciousness not seen in other murders—dismemberment, mutilation and torture. Criminals who have murdered LGBT people often point to the Bible as motivations for their actions. It is time to replace harm with God's love. The church, the world, and the families of LGBT people are waiting.

Analysis

Since the 2008 General Conference, global support for LGBT people has expanded dramatically.

- Official Christian teaching now recognizes that LGBT people are part of God's good creation. More than 10 million Protestants belong to denominations that, through prayer, Bible study and Christian witness, dropped their policies of exclusions.
- Myths about clergy being attacked, churches burned and mass exodus if inclusive policies were implemented have proven false in sister denominations. However, violence does continue against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons. Threats of schism were laid to rest as officials confirm that less than 5% of congregations departed.
- In the United Methodist Church, 33 retired bishops fulfilled their teaching role by offering counsel to the church on the harms created by the ban on ordination of gay or lesbian Christians who are called to ministry.
- Black Methodists for Church Renewal and leaders in the National Federation of Asian American United Methodists have joined the Love Your Neighbor Common Witness Coalition to end discrimination against LGBT people of all races and cultures.
- More than 1,200 UMC clergy signed a pledge to provide ministry to couples regardless of gender because their ordination vow calls them to serve all of God's people. Thousands of UMC Clergy serve churches in states and districts with equal marriage laws and they are being asked to officiate at marriages for same-gender couples.
- United Methodists around the world are quietly asking for conversation about sexual orientation and gender identities. They hear Christians in Africa, Latin America and Asia speaking out for LGBT people but many clergy fear they will not be supported by their peers and supervisors if they speak. Bishops and clergy must teach respect for everyone.
- All of God's people are respected by the United Methodist policy against homophobia and heterosexism voted at the 2008 General Conference. As a global church we must join United Nations officials who are speaking out for the protection of LGBT people around the world based on documented patterns of violence, discrimination and persecution.
- LGBT sisters and brothers in Uganda are asking for a revival led by Christian leaders who do not condemn them. Do we have a message of hope and love we can offer—or will our funding ban prevent us from loving our neighbor?

MFSA urges delegates to follow John Wesley's three simple rules as you decide how to vote. Wesley's simple rules: Do no harm. Do good. Stay in love with God. We urge you to do good—eliminate all condemnations and bans. Do no harm—if you cannot vote with us, choose to abstain. Stay in love with God—in all cases, God asks us to love, not to judge. It is time for United Methodists to trust God as the church is led into full inclusion of LGBT people.

SUPPORT & OPPOSITION

Key: **KS** = key support, **S** = support, **N** = neutral, **O** = oppose, **KO** = key oppose

CHURCH AND SOCIETY B

Marriage Equality

KS:Petition #21013-CB-Par. 161.B-G, p. 263, Marriage Definition, OR-ID AC, deletes between a man and a woman and adds "between two consenting adults."

S:Petition #21011-CB-Par. 161.B-G, p. 263, Marriage Equality, 2ACs +7, deletes marriage is between a man and woman.

S:Petition #21012-CB-Par. 161.B-G, p. 263, Eliminate Discriminatory Language, Yellowstone AC + 3, deletes marriage between a man and a woman.

S:Petition #21014-CB-Par. 161.B-G, p. 264, Marriage Definition, John Fisher, MI, deletes marriage is between a man and a woman and adds "two people who love and are committed to each other."

S:Petition #21015-CB-Par. 161.B-G, p. 264, Marriage Definition, PacNW AC, deletes marriage is between a man and a woman.

S:Petition #21028-CB-Par. 161.B-G, p. 264, Marriage Definition, NI AC, deletes def as between a man and a woman.

O:Petition #21016-CB-Par. 161.B-G, p. 264, Marriage Definition, Kevin Fitzsimmons, KS, deletes sentence of support for marriage defined as union of one man and one woman, leaves in earlier def. of marriage as one man and one woman.

KO: Petition 21006-CB-R9999-G, p. 338, Prohibit Promotion of Homosexual Unions, George Harpold, MD, seeks to add legislation to oppose homosexual unions using hurtful language and names areas of UMC congregations that publicly support gay marriage and seeks to say that no UMC be used for such purposes.

Human Sexuality

KS: Petition 21031-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 270, Human Sexuality, 8 ACs+6, deletes "heterosexual" in 3rd sentence and the incompatibility statement.

S: Petition #20023-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 267, Removal of language, Desert SW and NY ACs, deletes word heterosexual.

S: Petition #20024-CB-Par. 161.B-G, p. 267, Desert SW and No IL ACs plus 1, deletes sentence of UMC not condoning homosexuality and the incompatibility clause.

S: Petition 21034-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 271, Human Sexuality, Kevin Fitzgibbons, KS, not best wording but removes incompatibility clause.

S: Petition 21041-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 274, Human Sexuality, John Fisher, MI, removed incompatibility sentence, recognizes prior condemnation flawed and says we need to repent and ask for forgiveness.

N: Petition 21030-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 269, Human Sexuality, Jeanette Grenz, replaces "incompatible" with "Christians of good faith differ."

N: Petition 21032-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 270, Human Sexuality, Global Young Peoples Convo, rewrites 2008 Majority Report affirming sexuality as good and includes people of good faith disagree on homosexuality.

N: Petition 21033-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 271, Human Sexuality, Kansas East AC, amends 3rd sentence and replaces "incompatible" with Christians of good faith differ.

N: Petition 21035-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 272, Replace Term, replaces homosexuality with exploitative sexual practices.

N: Petition 21039-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 273, Human Sexuality, TX AC, deletes sentence on, heterosexual marriage and the one on incompatibility.

N: Petition 21042-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 274, Human Sexuality, Tracy Merrick for FUMC Pittsburgh, supports divergent views.

N: Petition 21043-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 275, Human Sexuality, CAL-PAC AC, supports divergent views with additional paragraphs.

N: Petition 21044-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 276, Human Sexuality, PAC-NW AC +10, "we are conflicted" and supports divergent views.

N: Petition 21062-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 277, Human Sexuality, NE AC, deletes current paragraph on incompatibility and substitutes our church is divided.

N: Petition 21063-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 275, Human Sexuality, Brian Sutton, KS, we are divided.

N: Petition 21101-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 277, Human Sexuality, Darrel Vines, TX, deletes sentence on heterosexual marriage only.

O:Petition #20293-CB-Par. 161.B-G, p. 268, Definitions, Jonathan Carlsen, leaves in incompatibility clause and adds several negative paragraphs on transvestitism, transsexual, bisexual, transgender, etc.

O: Petition 21036-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 272, Human Sexuality, rewrites paragraph with no mention of homosexuality but supports chastity and self control and affirms God's grace to all.

O: Petition 21040-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 274, Human Sexuality, William Cherry, PA, removes incompatibility sentence and adds Christians differ on issue, good intent but poorly worded.

O: Petition 20657-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 277, Human Sexuality, Mark Tooley, adds sentence to end of Par. 162 to affirm legal rights of believers to espouse traditional marriage and chastity.

KO: Petition 21037-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 272, Human Sexuality, Joseph DiPaulo, PA, strengthens the incompatibility statement adding a paragraph that includes it is consensus of worldwide Christian movement.

KO: Petition 21038-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 270, Human Sexuality, Joseph DiPaulo, PA, strengthens the incompatibility statement by adding covenant of marriage .. for male and female, etc.

KO: Petition 21045-CB-Par161.F-G, p. 277, Human Sexuality, Charles Heaberlin for First UMC, Decatur TX, dismisses church and science understanding of homosexuality.

KO: Petition #20659-CB-Par. 161.F-G, p. 268, Internet Pornography, Mark Tooley, adds sentences about regretting pervasiveness of internet pornography and ends purpose of sex as between a man and a woman. Good first sentence and could support if second sentence deleted.

KO: Petition #20874-CB-Par. 161.F-G, p. 268, Homosexuality, Al-WFL ACs +4, leave in definition as incompatible etc.

Equal Rights and Rights of All Persons

KS:Petition 21046-CB-Par 162.J, p. 288, Update Equal Rights, 4 ACs +12, Under Equal Rights Regardless of Sexual Orientation add civil marriage and civil unions.

KS:Petition 21050-CB-Par 162.J, p. 289, Update Equal Rights, Pac NW AC, adds civil marriage and civil unions to protection of rightful claims, adds gender identity to support efforts to stop violence.

KS:Petition #20132-CB-R2046, p. 297, Rights of All Persons, James Winkler GBCS, makes several changes that affirm full human dignity as well as equal civil and legal protection of all GLBT persons. Calls on all UMs to vote against or advocate repeal of any criminal laws that target and penalize people based on gender identity or sexual orientation.

S:Petition 21048-CB-Par 162.J, p. 288, Update Equal Rights, Kevin Fitzgibbons, adds sentence supporting efforts to stop violence and discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations.

S:Petition 20693-CB-R2046-G, p. 298, Rights of All Persons, Kevin Fitzgibbons, KS, added credit, education, public accommodations and adoption to discrimination experienced by LGBT persons, calls on UMC Board to support laws that prohibit discrimination in these areas.

KO:Petition 21049-CB-Par 162.J, p. 288, Change to Equal Rights, Joseph DiPaulo,

PA, believes legal rights and liberties can be protected contractually and do not require change to legal def of marriage as one man and one woman.

KO:Petition 20946-CB-R2043-G, p. 297, Delete Resolution, Jonathan Carlsen FL, seeks to delete Resolution on Opposition to Homophobia and Heterosexism.

Prohibition of Bullying

KS:Petition 20134-CB-R3425-G, p. 328, James Winkler, GBCS, defines bullying and decries bullying in general and urges UM congregations to do a variety of positive things. Does not single out any group.

S:Petition 20442-CB-R3425-G, p. 329, 2 ACs +2, opposes bullying, urges UM related institutions, ministries and entities to create safe spaces for all without regard to religion, race, ethnicity, culture, citizenship, socio-economic status, gender identity, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, physical appearance and speech. Suggest adding gender.

S:Petition 20488-CB-R3425-G, p. 329, Cal-Pac AC, opposes bullying, urges UM agencies, boards, etc to do advocacy and education against bullying.

Thanks Petition

S:Petition 20987-CB-R9999, p. 336, Darrell Vines, Appreciation for "A Statement of Counsel," does a preamble about roles of bishops and then thanks the bishops who signed the statement and gives the full narrative of the statement.

FAITH AND ORDER

KS: Petition 20025-FO-Par 304-G, p. 895, Removal of Language, 9 Annual Conferences, delete par. 304.3 that discriminates against homosexual practice in all relationships.

KS: Petition 20993-FO-Par 304.3-G, p. 897, Delete Restriction, 2 Annual Conference + 1, Deletes sentence on incompatibility.

S Petition 20995-FO-Par 304-G, p. 898, Qualifications for Ordination, A. W. Martin, TX, changes sentence to self-avowed homosexual incompatible as past teaching and gives to Annual Conferences the responsibility to evaluate homosexuality as it relates to fitness for ministry.

S: Petition 20996-FO-Par 304-G, p. 895, Qualifications for Ordination, Tracy Merrick, PA, Amends par. 304.2 and 304.3 to remove prohibition of homosexual clergy both single and partnered.

O: Petition 20997-FO-Par 304-G, p. 898, Ordination of Homosexuals, Sarah Roberts, TX, adds sentence to allow homosexuals who practice celibacy to be ordained.

O: Petition 20685-FO-Par 304-G, p. 896, Remarriage after Divorce, John Hester, adds remarriage after divorce to homosexuality as incompatible with Christian teaching.

KO: Petition 20852-FO-Par 304-G, p. 896, Homosexuality, Dale Bradley, adds to definition of self-avowed be determined by the mouth of two or three witnesses, adds candidates for ordination sign stamen supporting UMC Disciple that prohibits practice of homosexuality, etc.

KO: Petition 20869-FO-Par 304-G, p. 897, Amend Footnote to Define "Self-Avowed Practicing Homosexual", Keith Boyette, VA, adds multiple definitions of self-avowed including entering into a civil union, domestic partnership, etc or communicates they are a practicing homosexual in any public setting.

KO: Petition 20992-FO-Par 304.3-G, p. 897, Retain Language, Shirley Woodie, W FL AC, retains current Par. 304.4 with no amendments.

KO: Petition 20994-FO-Par 304-G, p. 897, Qualifications for Ordination, C. Chappell Temple TX, Deletes incompatible with Christian teaching and adds incompatible with holy living and God's ultimate will for His church, etc.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

KS:Petition #-20029-FA-Par. 613.20-G, p. 651, Removal of Language, 8 Annual Conferences, deletes paragraph 20 prohibiting annual conferences from giving UM funds to any gay caucus or otherwise promote acceptance of homosexuality.

KS:Petition #20030-FA-Par. 806.9-G, p. 659, Removal of Language, 8 Annual Conferences + 14, deletes Par. 806.9 Fiscal Responsibilities, that prohibits funds going to any gay caucus or group and giving the Council the right to stop such expenditures.

KS: Petition #20721-FA-NonDis-G, p. 854, Same Sex Marriage Pension Benefit, Bruce Robbins, MN, seeks to add pension and health benefits for partners of same sex couples.

KO:Petition #20622-FA-Par. 613-G, p. 650, Campus Ministry Programming, John Lomperis, added item at end of paragraph to prevent UM funds going to campus ministry programs that support in any way sexual relations between anyone except a man and a woman.

KO:Petition #20851-FA-Par. 613.20-G, p. 651, Dale Bradley, OH, seeks to amend both Par 613.20 and 806.9 that prohibit funds for gay caucuses, etc. Then adds a sentence that the resolution not to financially support activities related to anti-gay or anti lesbian groups. Appears to be saying two opposite things.

KO: Petition #20893-FA-Par 807.13a1-G, p. 662, GCFA Policy, Tom Thomas Jr., VA, adds requiring general agencies to hire with expectation that persons be dedicated to heterosexual marriage, celibacy in singleness, etc.

KO:Petition #20637-FA-Par. 613-G, p. 650, Prohibit Support of Cohabitation, John Lomperis, Amend section to prevent Annual Conferences from providing benefits to domestic partners.

KO:Petition #20894-FA-Par. 613-G, p. 651, CCFA Personnel Policy, Tom Thomas for Evangelical Fellowship in VA AC, adds long sentence that employees are expected to be heterosexual in marriage and celibate in singleness

KO: Petition #21004-FA-Non-Dis-G, p. 855, Division with Retention of Property, Mike Childs, MS, seeks to allow churches that show by 2/3 vote that they cannot support practice of UMC on support of homosexuality can separate and retain full property rights and funds.

KO: Petition #21005-FA-Non-Dis-G, p. 856, Division Task Force, Wendell Williams WI, seeks to have a theologically diverse task force to develop a process to allow those that divide on controversy over homosexuality to keep church buildings and property and amicably separate from UMC.

KO: Petition #21007-FA-Non-Dis-G, p. 856, Two Denomination Task Force, Garry Ruff, MS, seeks to appoint a task force to develop a plan to split the UMC into two denominations defined by position on homosexuality.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

KS: Petition 20482-GA-Par 4-C-G, p. 912, Expand List of Exclusions, John Shaffer, Pac NW AC, Adds gender, gender identity, marital status, sexual orientation and ability to list of those not allowed to be excluded by any member or any organization of UMC.

S: Petition 20540-GA-Par 4-C-G, p. 913, Inclusiveness, William Cherry +2, adds phrase of be in ministry to all and delete categories of people such as race, color, etc. and leaves the sentence to say All persons shall be eligible to attend services, etc.

S: Petition 20786-GA-par 4-C-G, Broaden UM Constitution on Inclusiveness, Tracy Merrick, PA, deletes list of person of sacred worth and leaves all persons are of sacred worth in one place. Later adds ethnicity, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity to list.

KO: Petition 20772-GA-Par 4-C-G, p. 913, Readiness for Membership, Joseph DePaulo, PA, adds language to leave to discretion of local pastor understanding and readiness for membership.

KO: Petition 20853-GA-Par 716-G, Investments, Dale Bradley, OH, adds Socially Responsible Investments not include organizations that publicly advertise or is generally known to support gay rights programs.

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION

KS: Petition 20775-IC-R9999, p. 1296, UMC and Boy Scouts of America, Lynette Fields +1, resolution for GC to submit an open letter to Boy Scouts of America supporting a change in policy to reflect standard of equality to all boys regardless of sexual orientation.

KO Petition 20895-IC-NonDis-G, p. 1289, ELCA/UMC Full Communion, Tom Thomas, Jr. VA, wants the GC to instruct GCCUIC to express dismay at ELCA decision to ordain practicing homosexuals, to recommend they reconsider and rescind this action and report back to GC2016.

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

KS: Petition #21054-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1309, Chargeable Offense, Tracy Merrick, deletes part about homosexuality and leaves in infidelity in committed, monogamous relationships.

KS: Petition #21059-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1312, Chargeable Offense, Frederick Jackson deletes section on homosexuality and conduction same sex weddings being chargeable offenses.

KS: Petition #21060-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1311, Chargeable Offense, Steven Hermes, also deletes section on homosexuality and leaves in not being celibate in singleness or faithful in marriage and adds support of or compliance with bullying.

KS: Petition #21061-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1311, Chargeable Offense, 5 Annual Conference = 11 others deletes section on homosexuality being a chargeable offense.

S: Petition #21056-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1310, Exception, Joseph Allen, makes exception for clergy to be able to officiate at same sex marriage in states where it is legal.

S: Petition #21058-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1310, Chargeable Offense, Bruce Ruggles, deletes section on homosexuality and leaves in not being celibate in singleness or faithful in marriage.

N: Petition #21055-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1309, Chargeable Offense, Kevin Fitzgibbon removes self-avowed homosexuals and adds not being faithful in same gender relationships.

KO: Petition #20529-JA-Par2711.3-G, p. 1330, Mandatory Penalty, Keith Boyette adds minimal mandatory penalties for clergy charged with being homosexual or conducting same-sex rites of 1-3 year suspension for first offense and termination of conference membership and revocation of credentials for second offense.

KO: Petition #20530-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1311, Chargeable Offense, Keith Boyette adds entering into a civil union, domestic partnership or marriage with person of same sex.

KO: Petition #21003-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1312, Chargeable Offense, Doug Russell, adds same wording on civil union, etc as Keith Boyette.

KO: Petition #21052-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1309, Retain Language, David Ring, leaves current language of self-avowed practicing homosexual or conducting ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions, etc. being a chargeable offense for any bishop, clergy member, local pastor, etc.

KO: Petition #21053-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1309, Chargeable Offense, John Lomperis, adds refusing to answer direct questions added to chargeable offenses.

KO: Petition #21057-JA-Par2702.1-G, p. 1310, Chargeable Offense, Chappel Temple, rewrites one section and then adds the same offenses in different words.

LOCAL CHURCH

KS: Petition 20481-LC-Par214-G, p. 1344, Include Marginalized People, Pac NW AC +10, adds sentence to Par. 4 that no person shall be excluded from the UMC for any reason with a list that includes gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.

KO: Petition 20537-LC-R9999-G, p. 1366, Homosexual Practice and Local Church Property, Mike Childs, adds new resolution to allow local churches to amicably separate from the UMC if they disagree on official position of accepting homosexuality.

MINISTRY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

KS: Petition #20026-MH-Par311.2d-G, p. 1403, Removal of Language, 8 ACs +15, deletes paragraph preventing Boards of Ordained Ministry from certifying candidates for ordination because they are homosexual.

KS: Petition #20027-MH-Par311.2d-G, p. 1404, Removal of Language, 5 ACs +13, amends another section of footnote to delete quote from Social Principles condoning practice of homosexuality.

KS: Petition #20028-MH-Par 341.6-G, p. 1430, Removal of Language, 10 ACs +18, deletes .e under Unauthorized Conduct that says ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by UM ministers and not be conducted in UM churches.

S Petition #21093-MH-Par311.2d-G, p. 1404, Removal of Language, 2 ACs +2, deletes two paragraphs quoting from the Social Principles.

S: Petition #21094-MH-Par311.2d-G, p. 1403, Removal of Language, Kevin Myers for WI AC, deletes the first sentence on incompatibility.

N: Petition #20998-MH-Par 341.6-G, p. 1431, Allow Ceremonies, Kevin Fitzgibbons, changes homosexual unions shall not be conducted to may be conducted in our churches.

N: Petition #20999-MH-Par 341.6-G, p. 1431, Clergy Required to Perform Ceremonies, Rick Dorman, changes homosexual unions shall not be conducted to shall be conducted in our churches.

O: Petition #21092-MH-Par311.2d-G, p. 1404, Removal of Language, Frederic Jackson, deletes words "between a man and a woman" but leaves in incompatibility language.

O: Petition #21001-MH-Par 341.6-G, p. 1432, Exception, Joseph Allen, makes excep-

Human Sexuality, continued from page 9.

tions for clergy to be able to perform same-sex marriages in states where it is legal.

O: Petition #21002-MH-Par 341.6-G, p. 1432, Limited Prohibition, A. W. Martin, makes exceptions for clergy to conduct same-sex unions in states, nations, territories, etc. where they are legal.

KO: Petition #20684-MH-Par 341.6-G, p. 1431, Remarriage after Divorce, John Hester, leaves in homosexual marriages not be conducted by UM clergy or in UM churches and adds remarriage after divorce.

KO: Petition #20875-MH-Par 341.6-G, p. 1431, Homosexual Unions, Leo Naapi, Shirley Woodie for AI-WF AC +4, leaves wording in discipline defining marriage as is.

KO: Petition #21000-MH-Par 341.6-G, p. 1431, Clergy Conduct, Joseph DiPaulo, re-writes the shall not be conducted to other words meaning the same thing.

KO: Petition #20539-MH-Par 360.3-G, p. 1444, Withdrawal, Mike Childs, adds section on allowing clergy to withdraw with church for reasons of opposing UM stand on homosexuality and not lose standing or property. ■

Beginning and End of Life Health Care

Options

Delegates to the 2012 United Methodist General Conference will be voting on a number of petitions dealing directly with — or closely related to — beginning and end of life health care. They will also once again be addressing the issue of continued membership in the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice by the Church's Women's Division and the General Board of Church and Society.

At Issue

Will the Church continue to support comprehensive health care and services relating to reproduction? Will it continue to support women and their partners in their decisions as to when and how often to bear children? Will it assume a leadership role in bringing together medical, theological, and social science disciplines to address the complex issue of reproductive justice in all of its manifestations? Will it continue to support the need for full, positive, age-appropriate and factual sex education opportunities for children, young people, and adults? And will it, for the first time, begin to address the ever-evolving issues surrounding health care and service at the end of life that are currently being debated in society?

Analysis

The Social Principles have long provided United Methodists with positions on health care related to sexuality and child bearing. The Church has also declared that “the decision whether or not to give birth to children must include acceptance of the responsibility to provide for their mental, physical, and spiritual growth, as well as consideration of the possible effect on quality of life for family and society.” It has also supported the right of all children to have access to quality education “including full sex education appropriate to their stage of development that utilizes the best educational techniques and insights.”

In recent years, however, the participation of the United Methodist Church in the struggle to support a woman and her partner's ability to determine whether, how often, and when to bear children has come under increased attack by certain individuals and groups within the denomination. Legislation will once again be coming before the 2012 General Conference that would — if adopted — have the Church take a position of advocating further restrictions on the ability of women and their families to make responsible reproductive health care decisions. Highly charged issues including opposition to seldom used procedures as well as support for seemingly minor changes to the Discipline or Book of Resolutions are being used by some to try to move the Church to a position of being opposed to its historic stand in support of comprehensive reproductive health care.

Despite the fact that the United Methodist Church was a founding member of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice and continues to work closely with its other member organizations and staff on matters of mutual concern, some within the church also seek to convey the idea that RCRC's moral and theological stance contradicts the United Methodist Church's teaching on reproductive health issues. In reality, both faith communities and policymakers recognize the Religious Coalition as a respected voice of moderation and tolerance. The organization's recently adopted strategic plan is moving it even further in the direction of involvement with fundamental justice issues familiar to the United Methodist Church.

The question remains, “Will United Methodists as people of faith continue to seek a society that values human life and human dignity and honors individual conscience; believes the ability to make moral decisions - including about beginning and end of life issues - is the very basis of an individual's dignity; (and) seeks to correct the conditions that underlie the high rate of unintended pregnancy and abortion, through comprehensive sex education, affordable family planning services, and high-quality accessible medical care?” (Question adapted from a statement in the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice 2006 Annual Report, page 1.)

Support

MFSA recommends that the 2012 General Conference support access to age-appropriate comprehensive sexual and reproductive education and health care as well as the ability of persons to act as responsible moral agents on beginning and end of life issues.

CHURCH & SOCIETY B:

Petition # 20135, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 278, Abortion, Source: GBCS – Urge strong support with addition of two amendments incorporating intent of Petition 20838, ADCA p. 325 and Petition 20403, ADCA p. 324.

Petition # 20156, CB-R2121-G, ADCA p. 300, Suicide, Source: GBCS – Urge strong support.

Petition # 20133, CB-R3361-G, ADCA p. 326, World's Population, Source: GBCS – Urge strong support.

Petition # 20127, CB-R9999, ADCA p. 332, Maternal Health, Source: Multiple - Support with two clarifying intent amendments.

Petition # 20864, CB-R9999, ADCA p. 335, Death With Dignity, Source: Dan Lewis - Urge strong support with amendment to eliminate duplicate language.

OPPOSE

CHURCH & SOCIETY A:

Petition # 20643, CB-¶161-G, ADCA p. 192, Basic Freedoms, Source: Joseph P. Derso - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20700, CB-¶161-G, ADCA p. 192, Basic Freedoms, Source: Bill Edwards - Urge strong opposition.

CHURCH & SOCIETY B:

Petition # 20531, CB-¶161-G, ADCA p. 262, Supporting Pregnant Women, Source: Gordon Van Namee - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20523, CB-¶169.J-G, ADCA p. 279, Disabled Babies, Source: Jondra Statzer – Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20611, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 279, Legal Protection of the Unborn, Source: Mark Tooley - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20924, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 280, Abortion, Source: Jonathan Carlsen - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21017, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 281, Abortion, Source: Dixie Brewster - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21018, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 281, Choice of Health Care Professionals, Source: Marget Sikes - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21019, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 281, Abortion, Source: Sara Gamer - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21020, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 281, Abortion, Source: Linda W. Adams - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21021, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 282, Abortion, Source: Rich Mason - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21022, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 282, Abortion, Source: John R. Wilson - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21023, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 282, Abortion, Source: Paul T. Stallsworth - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21024, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 283, Abortion, Source: Jan Knight - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21025, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 283, Abortion, Source: Roger Puhr - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21026, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 283, Abortion, Source: Roger Puhr - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21027, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 284, Abortion, Source: Deborah White - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20534, CB-¶162-G, ADCA p. 284, Rights of the Unborn, Source: Riley B. Case - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20629, CB-¶162.N-G, ADCA p. 289, Destruction of Human Embryos, Source: John S.A. Lomperis - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20605, CB-¶162.V-G, ADCA p. 291, Right to Good Health Care, Source: Mark Tooley - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20805, CB-¶162.V-G, ADCA p. 292, Health Care, Source: Thomas E. Davis - Urge opposition.

Petition # 20989, CB-NonDis-G, ADCA p. 293, Withdraw UMC from RCRC, Source: Multiple - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20991, CB-NonDis-G, ADCA p. 293, Withdraw UMC from RCRC, Source: Carol J. Van Havel - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20781, CB-R2026-G, ADCA p. 294, Abortion Only When Appropriate, Source: Cynthia M. Evans - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20811, CB-R2026-G, ADCA p. 294, Abortion, Source: Linda W. Adams - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20862, CB-R2026-G, ADCA p. 295, Responsible Parenthood, Source: Marget Sikes - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20945, CB-R2026-G, ADCA p. 295, Responsible Parenthood, Source: Jonathan Carlsen - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 21010, CB-R2026-G, ADCA p. 296, Delete Supreme Court, Source: Cynthia M. Evans - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20988, CB-R3204-G, ADCA p. 314, Delete Resolution, Source: Roger Puhr - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20990, CB-R3204-G, ADCA p. 314, Withdraw from RCRC, Source: John S.A. Lomperis - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20403, CB-R9999, ADCA p. 334, Alternatives to Abortion, Source: Global Young People's Convo – Oppose: Incorporate intent of this petition to support women wishing to carry their pregnancy to term as an amendment to Petition #20135, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 278, Abortion.

Petition # 20838, CB-R3306-G, ADCA p. 325, Healing of Post-Abortion Stress, Source: Jan Knight - Urge opposition but incorporate intent of petition as an amendment to Petition # 20135, CB-¶161.J-G, ADCA p. 278, Abortion.

DISCIPLESHIP

Petition # 20621, DI-¶806-G, ADCA p. 495, Pregnancy Resource Centers, Source: John S.A. Lomperis - Urge strong opposition.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Petition # 20624, FA-¶806-G, ADCA p. 657, End Pro-Choice Political Expenditures, Source: John S.A. Lomperis - Urge strong opposition.

Petition # 20941, CB-¶806.9-G, ADCA p. 659, Funding Non-Christian Practices, Source: Jonathan Carlsen - Urge strong opposition. ■

ADDRESS, cont. from page 1

ing resurrection life," he explained. "If God can bring to life the Crucified Christ, surely God can bring to life a calcified church," Weaver said. "Resurrection defines who we are, our identity."

The connection among United Methodists comes directly from being "one in Christ," not from agreeing on every issue that will be presented on the legislative agenda. "Some of us are here in pain, some of us are hopeful, some a mixture of both, but all of us are one," he said, adding "for the sake of the Risen Christ who first loved us, let us love one another."

Weaver said he was more disturbed about the decline in "deep discipleship" than the membership decline in some segments of the church. "Where growth is most transformational, it reflects more than quantity; it is infused with this resurrection quality of discipleship."

The central question, he added, "is how The United Methodist Church will be shaped to be more effective in fulfilling God's resurrection mission with God's resurrection people in this changing time."

That means considering how every piece of legislation will help develop more vital congregations and help The United Methodist Church become a truly global church, the bishop pointed out.

It also means, as it did when the first episcopal address was presented 200 years ago, to "do everything as in the immediate presence of God," Weaver said.

During the Laity Address, history was made. Betty Spiwe Katiyo became the first person from Africa to speak in a Laity Address at General Conference. She related how her church in Africa is bursting at the seams.

"People are so hungry to hear the word of God, they sit outside (the church) just for the opportunity to worship together," Katiyo said, noting that her church seats more than 1,000.

Katiyo joined Dr. Steve Furr from Jackson, Ala., and Amory Peck from Bellingham, Wash., in delivering the address, which emphasized the mission to make disciples. All three speakers began with the words "by the grace of God, I am a disciple of Jesus Christ."

Katiyo used the image of a symphony to illustrate the partnership between laity and clergy. "A conductor of an orchestra does not make a sound — instead enlivens others to be effective. Laity are the choir who should be making the noise, and clergy are the conductors. And guess what? To succeed, we need each other!"

Making disciples of Jesus Christ is a responsibility of all Christians, she added. "We cannot be observers; we are called to be people of action."

Peck talked about actions taken by the 2008 General Conference in Fort Worth, Texas, that focused more responsibility on the laity for making disciples and transforming the world. The first action was adding "for the transformation of the world" to the end of the denomination's mission statement, "The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ."

"I'm proud of us for thinking audaciously," Peck said, "proud to be part of a church that names its mission in fearless,

Surprise announcement

In a news conference after the Tuesday morning session of General Conference, Amory Peck added a surprise announcement about her role in the Laity Address.

In commenting on fellow speaker Betty Spiwe Katiyo being the first central conference member to deliver the Laity Address, Peck, the Pacific Northwest Conference lay leader, said that she believed she was the first open lesbian to do the same.

"I stood as a symbol of all LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) United Methodists who are in our churches," said Peck, a retired librarian who is a member at Bellingham (Wash.) United Methodist Church and was the first-elected lay delegate from her conference.

"Only a handful of people knew that, and I feel like I let a lot of people down in not saying it (in the address). I was sad that I could not say that openly. But the Laity Address is about bringing people together. Of course gays and lesbians are active in the church, but there is fearfulness in being open about it. I wish we could lift the silence because the silence is crushing.

"I believe in what I said, that the church needs all of us, with no exceptions," she added. "I'd like to see all people welcomed at church, in membership, and ordination."

daring, bold and spirit-filled language. Proud that we — lay and clergy alike — overwhelmingly claimed such a vision."

Another new addition was Paragraph 126 in the Book of Discipline, The Ministry of the Laity: "The witness of the laity ... is the primary evangelistic ministry through which all people will come to know Christ and The United Methodist Church will fulfill its mission."

"Laypeople, are you hearing what we've promised to do?" Peck asked. "Performing the primary evangelistic ministry by which The United Methodist Church will fulfill its mission." Furr, a physician, discussed his physical transformation in losing weight as symbolic of the church.

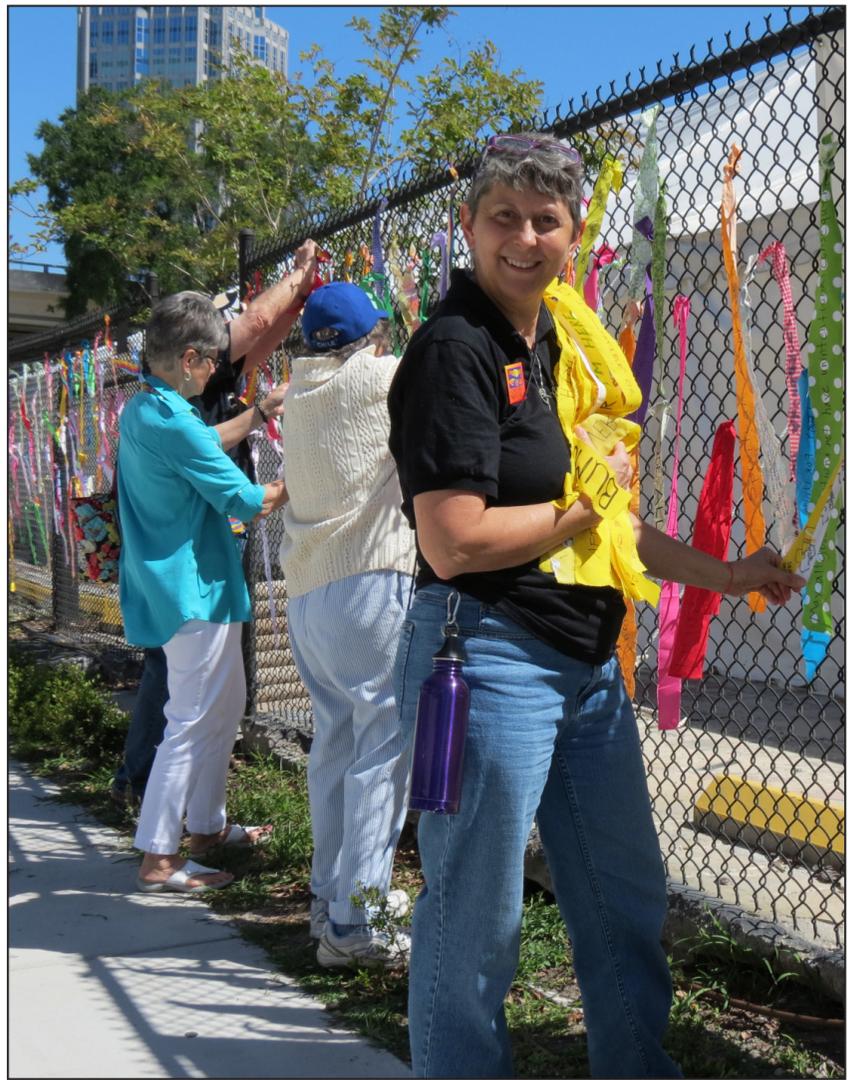
"As part of my personal transformation, a part of me had to die so that the rest of me could live," he said.

"A part of me had to die so that the real me could live," he said. "Today, as we struggle to transform our lives and our churches, we must realize some things are going to have to die; some things are going to have to be left behind so that we can continue to live and thrive."

Furr said he lost more than 60 pounds by transforming from unhealthy habits to healthy living: eating less food, eating more nutritious food, and working out.

He said the transformations of the first followers of Christ were even more dramatic. "(They had) lives so transformed, so different, that some of them even had to change their names; from Simon to Peter, Saul to Paul. They were such different people it was as if they had been born again."

The United Methodist Church and this General Conference must be transformed, Furr said.

Prayer Ribbons Adorn Tabernacle

Rev. Lois McCullen Parr (Broadway UMC, N IL) ties prayer ribbons brought from Chicago to the Prayer Wall that surrounds the tabernacle. Photo courtesy of Ben Roe.

Check out our website at
gc12.org

Follow the
Twitter hashtag
#gc12love

Good to Know Before You Shop

MFSA encourages delegates and volunteers to use their economic choices to make a difference for worker's rights in Tampa and throughout Florida during their time at General Conference.

Here are some things that might be good to know:

- Publix is under a boycott from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, a community-based organization of mainly Latino, Mayan Indian, and Haitian immigrants working in low-wage jobs throughout the state of Florida. While other grocers (Whole Foods and Trader Joe's) have agreed to take responsibility for human rights abuses in fields where produce is grown and picked, Publix has refused to take action. We also recognize that Publix employees love their jobs and are treated well. Shouldn't the individuals who provide the produce also love their jobs and be treated well? To learn more, visit <http://ciw-online.org/action.html>. If you decide to shop at Publix, MFSA encourages you to write a letter to the store manager and deliver it at the end of your trip.
- Get ready for the Friday Farmer's Market, held each Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the 200-300 block of Twiggs Street. The mission of the Tampa Downtown Market is to serve as a community-gathering place where local farmers, producers, and artisans can offer fresh agricultural and related products to generate a sense of local pride and further the economic development of Downtown Tampa.

- Don't like the line at Starbucks? Buy local! Check out these local caffeine havens:
 - Kawha Coffee Roasting: 400 N. Ashley Drive and their newest location at N. Tampa and Polk Streets;
 - Indigo Coffee: N. Franklin and Twiggs Street;

Or come have a cup in the Love Your Neighbor Tabernacle!!

**Event: Dining Out for Life Thursday**

Date: Today Time: 5:45 p.m.

**Place: Kurdi's Fresh Mediterranean Grill
777 North Ashley Drive, downtown Tampa**

Twenty-five percent of purchases made tonight at Kurdi's go to support Tampa's local HIV/AIDS service organization, AIDS Service Association of Pinellas.

We will gather at the Tabernacle and head over as a group following the evening Communion service.

This event is being hosted by Affirmation: United Methodists.

love makes a family



"I am a lesbian activist from Uganda. I look at Jesus as my role model. I've learned to question things here in America that I couldn't question in Uganda. It's been a long journey.

My mother was a Pentacostal minister in Uganda. I loved my culture and my religion. When I had my first same-sex attraction at 14, I knew there was something different about me. Everything I read in the Bible condemned homosexuality. It was very confusing for me because I loved my faith -but I felt like a sinner. I was suicidal for a time, and eventually I abandoned the church as it no longer made sense to me.

I can no longer live in Uganda because I would be putting my life at risk. I lost my job because I was an out lesbian; no one would hire me and I received threats. I'm much safer doing activism work in the USA on behalf of the LGBT community in Uganda. I'm hoping that eventually we will have more pastors and bishops like Bishop Desmond Tutu fighting for the rights of LGBT people in Africa. In order to challenge the anti-gay movement, we need progressive African voices.

I want to be a role model to the LGBT community in Uganda. We are not going to win this entirely without God's support, so we need the church. That's my message."

- Val Kalende



Bring these Family Diversity Projects photo-text exhibits to your church

WE HAVE FAITH:

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Clergy and People of Faith Speak Out

THE ROAD TO FREEDOM:

Portraits of People with Disabilities

IN OUR FAMILY:

Portraits of All Kinds of Families

LOVE MAKES A FAMILY:

Portraits of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender People & Their Families

OF MANY COLORS:

Portraits of Multiracial Families

PIONEERING VOICES:

Portraits of Transgender People

"It is the baptized children of God we are talking about. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender family members are already our sisters and brothers in Christ. They are already pastors and church leaders. These photos of loving families remind us that it is time for our official policies to catch up with the leading of the Holy Spirit. There are no second class citizens in the family of God."

—Bishop Melvin G. Talbert

To bring the exhibits to your community, please contact: **FAMILY DIVERSITY PROJECTS** • 413-256-0502 • info@familydiv.org • www.familydiv.org