

**100. 2000 General Conference
Proposed Constitutional Amendments
The United Methodist Church**

During the 2000 General Conference, action was taken on eleven (11) proposed Constitutional Amendments. They are now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote. This is in accord with Par. 57, Article I, which reads:

Amendments to the Constitution shall be made upon a two-thirds majority of the General Conference present and voting and a two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members of the several annual conferences present and voting, except in the case of the first and second Restrictive Rules, which shall require a three-fourths majority of all the members of the annual conferences present and voting. The vote, after being completed, shall be canvassed by the Council of Bishops, and the amendment voted upon shall become effective upon their announcement of its having received the required majority.

Rationale for Proposed Constitutional Amendments
The United Methodist Church
Voted General Conference May 2000

- I. The current Preamble contains language that anticipates a union of The Evangelical United Brethren Church and The Methodist Church, which took place more than thirty years ago. The proposed revision gives reference to The United Methodist Church and its predecessors, acknowledging an accomplished fact.
- II. The current paragraph contains language that anticipates a union of The Evangelical United Brethren Church and The Methodist Church, which took place more than thirty years ago. The proposed revision gives reference to The United Methodist Church and its predecessors, acknowledging an accomplished fact.
- III. The current paragraph contains language that anticipates a union of The Evangelical United Brethren Church and The Methodist Church, which took place more than thirty years ago. The proposed revision gives reference to The United Methodist Church and its predecessors, acknowledging an accomplished fact.
- IV. In keeping with the directives of Judicial Council Decision #811, this proposed amendment amends language in the Constitution that will allow sections of *The Book of Discipline* to be brought into alignment with the theological concepts already present in *The United Methodist Baptismal Covenant Services*, approved by the 1984 General Conference, and in *By Water and the Spirit*, an official statement of baptism for The United Methodist Church approved by the 1996 General Conference.
- V. The proposed new paragraph decries racism in every time and place and promotes racial justice throughout the church universal and in the world. It highlights the urgency of Christ's call to love and justice for persons of all races more clearly and emphatically.
- VI. The current paragraph contains language that anticipates a union of The Evangelical United Brethren Church and The Methodist Church, which took place more than thirty years ago.

The proposed revision gives reference to The United Methodist Church and its predecessors, acknowledging an accomplished fact.

- VII. In keeping with the directives of Judicial Council Decision #811, this proposed amendment clarifies the one category of membership used when calculating numbers for General Conference delegates.
- VIII. In keeping with the directives of Judicial Council Decision #811, this proposed amendment clarifies the one membership category for the election of lay members of the annual conference.
- IX. The proposed amendment clarifies the categories, 12-17 and 18-30, from which young persons from each district are to be selected for membership in the annual conference. In addition, it raises the upper age limit from 25 to 30.
- X. In keeping with the directives of Judicial Council Decision #811, this proposed amendment clarifies the membership category for the election of lay members as delegates to the General, jurisdictional and central conferences.
- XI. In keeping with the directives of Judicial Council Decision #811, this proposed amendment clarifies the membership category of those eligible to elect the officers of a church or a charge.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment -- I

On May 9, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 864 Yes, 57 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

Amend the Preamble to the Constitution, beginning with the third paragraph, as follows:

Insert "The United Methodist Church and its predecessors," after "The prayers and intentions of" in the first sentence of the third paragraph and "The United Methodist Church has adopted and amended the following Constitution" following "Therefore," in the fifth paragraph.

Delete "In harmony with these prayers and intentions, these churches do now propose to unite, in the confident assurance that this act is an expression of the oneness of Christ's people" from the end of the third paragraph, the entire fourth paragraph and all, except the first word, of the fifth paragraph.

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, the Preamble to the Constitution would read:

The church is a community of all true believers under the Lordship of Christ. It is the redeemed and redeeming fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by persons divinely called, and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit the church seeks to provide for the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers, and the redemption of the world.

The church of Jesus Christ exists in and for the world, and its very dividedness is a hindrance to its mission in that world.

The prayers and intentions of The United Methodist Church and its predecessors, The Methodist Church and The Evangelical Brethren Church, have been and are for obedience to the will of our Lord that his people be one, in humility for the present brokenness of the Church and in gratitude that opportunities for reunion have been given.

Therefore, The United Methodist Church has adopted and amended the following Constitution.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment -- II

On May 9, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 908 Yes, 17 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In Division One, Paragraph 1, Article I, substitute the words “have been” for “shall be” and “into” for “in” in the first sentence and “United Methodist Church” for “united” in the second sentence.

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, Paragraph 1 would read:

Declaration of Union – The Evangelical United Brethren Church and The Methodist Church have been united into one Church. The United Methodist Church, as thus constituted, is, and shall be, the successor of the two united churches.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment -- III

On May 10, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 865 Yes, 32 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In Division One, Paragraph 3, Article III, amend by deletion and addition, as follows:

Delete “shall be” and “currently.” Insert “of The United Methodist Church are” after “Confession of Faith.” Add “at the time of their uniting” at end of sentence.

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, Paragraph 3 would read:

Articles of Religion and the Confession of Faith - The Articles of Religion and the Confession of Faith of The United Methodist Church are those held by The Methodist Church and The Evangelical United Brethren Church, respectively, at the time of their uniting.”

Proposed Constitutional Amendment -- IV

On May 12, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 700 Yes, 170 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In Division One, Paragraph 4, Article IV, amend by deletion and addition as follows:

Delete the second sentence, which reads, “Therefore all persons, without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its

worship services, to participate in its programs, and, when they take the appropriate vows, to be admitted into its membership in any local church in the connection.” In its place, add, ”The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth. All persons without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, Paragraph 4 would read:

Inclusiveness of the Church--The United Methodist Church is a part of the church universal, which is one Body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth. All persons without regard to race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, upon baptism be admitted as baptized members, and upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith, become professing members in any local church in the connection. In The United Methodist Church no conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, color, national origin, status or economic condition.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment -- V

On May 12, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 831 Yes, 45 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In Division One, insert a new paragraph immediately following Paragraph 4, which would read as follows:

Racial Justice—The United Methodist Church proclaims the value of each person as a unique child of God and commits itself to the healing and wholeness of all persons. The United Methodist Church recognizes that the sin of racism has been destructive to its unity throughout its history. Racism continues to cause painful division and marginalization. The United Methodist Church shall confront and seek to eliminate racism, whether in organizations or in individuals, in every facet of its life and in society at large. The United Methodist Church shall work collaboratively with others to address concerns that threaten the cause of racial justice at all times and in all places.

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, this amendment would become Paragraph 5. Other articles would be renumbered accordingly.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment -- VI

On May 10, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 900 Yes, 15 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In Division One, Paragraph 6, Article VI, amend by deletion and addition as follows:

Delete “in” following “Titles to properties” and “upon consummation of the union” in the first sentence.

Add “formerly held by” after “Titles to properties” in the first sentence.

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, Paragraph 6 would read:

Title to Properties—Titles to properties formerly held by The Evangelical United Brethren Church and The Methodist Church shall be held and administered in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*. Nothing in the Plan of Union at any time after the union is to be construed so as to require any local church or any other property owner of the former The Evangelical United Brethren Church or the former The Methodist Church to alienate or in any way change the title to property contained in its deed or deeds at the time of union and lapse of time.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment -- VII

On May 12, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 813 Yes, 57 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In Division Two, Section II, Paragraph 14, amend by substituting “professing” for “church” before members in (2).

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, Paragraph 14 would read:

The General Conference shall fix the ratio of representation in the General, jurisdictional, and central conferences from the annual conferences, missionary conferences, and the provisional annual conferences, computed on a two-factor basis: (1) the number of clergy members of the annual conference and the missionary conference, and (2) the number of professing members in the annual conference and the missionary conference; *provided* that each annual conference, missionary conference, or provisional annual conference shall be entitled to at least one clergy and one lay delegate in the General Conference and also in the jurisdictional or central conference.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment -- VIII

On May 12, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 702 Yes, 168 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In Division Two, Section VI, Paragraph 30, Article I, amend by addition as follows:

Add “professing” before “lay member” (also delete “a” and make “member” plural) in first sentence and before “members” in the third sentence.

AND

Proposed Constitutional Amendment -- IX

On May 12, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 686 Yes, 157 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In Division Two, Section VI, Paragraph 30, Article I, amend by deletion and addition as follows:

Delete “two young persons under twenty-five (25) years of age” in the first sentence and “twenty-five (25) in the second sentence. In place of the deletions, add “one young person between the ages of twelve (12) and seventeen (17) and one young person between the ages of eighteen (18) and thirty (30)” in the first sentence and “thirty (30)” in the second sentence.

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, Paragraph 30, Article I would read:

The annual conference shall be composed of clergy members as defined by the General Conference, together with professing lay members elected by each charge, the diaconal ministers, the active deaconesses under episcopal appointment within the bounds of the annual conference, the conference president of United Methodist Women, the conference president of United Methodist Men, the conference lay leader, district lay leaders, the president or equivalent officer of the conference young adult organization, the president of the conference youth organization, the chair of the annual conference college student organization, and one young person between the ages of twelve (12) and seventeen (17) and one young person between the ages of eighteen (18) and thirty (30) from each district to be selected in such a manner as may be determined by the annual conference. In the annual conferences of the central conferences, the four-year participation and the two-year membership requirements may be waived by the annual conference for young persons under thirty (30) years of age. Such persons must be professing members of The United Methodist Church and active participants at the time of election. Each charge served by more than one clergy shall be entitled to as many lay members as there are clergy members. The lay members shall have been for the two years next preceding their election members of The United Methodist Church and shall have been active participants in The United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election.

If the lay membership should number less than the clergy members of the annual conference, the annual conference shall, by its own formula, provide for the election of additional lay members to equalize lay and clergy membership on the annual conference.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment – X

On May 12, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 791 Yes, 71 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In Division Two, Section VI, Paragraph 34, Article V, insert the word “professing” before the second use of “members.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, Paragraph 34 would read:

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

Proposed Constitutional Amendment -- XI

On May 10, 2000, at a session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church held in Cleveland, Ohio, the following Constitutional Amendment was made by a recorded vote of 778 Yes, 94 No. It is now presented to the Annual Conferences for vote.

In Division Two, Section IX, Paragraph 42, Article II, insert the word “professing” before “members.”

If voted and so declared by the Council of Bishops, Paragraph 42 would read:

Article II. Election of Church Officers. Unless the General Conference shall order otherwise, the officers of the church or churches constituting a charge shall be elected by the charge conference or by the professing members of said church or churches at a meeting called for that purpose, as may be arranged by the charge conference, unless the election is otherwise required by local church charters or state or provincial law.