

1 **Document 640.01**
2 **Name: Special Sundays with Offerings for 2024**
3 **Author: Conference Council on Finance and Administration**
4 **CCFA Comment: _____**
5

6 **ACTION:**
7 The Northern Illinois Conference recommends the following Special Sundays with
8 offerings for 2024:
9

10
11 Special Sundays
12

13 General Church Offerings 2024

14	Human Relations Day	January 14, 2024
15	UMCOR Sunday	March 17, 2024
16	Native American Ministries Sunday	April 21, 2024
17	Peace with Justice Sunday	June 2, 2024
18	World Communion Sunday	October 6, 2024
19	United Methodist Student Day	November 24, 2024

20 **(NIC Churches are encouraged to celebrate UM Student Day any Sunday in October or**
21 **November and are encouraged to connect with the NIC Board of Higher Ed to create space**
22 **and connections with campus ministries located throughout the NIC.)**
23
24

25 Conference Offerings 2024

26	Scouting Ministries	Any Sunday in February or March*
27	Golden Cross	May 5, 2024
28	Volunteers in Mission	Any Sunday in July or August
29	Christian Education	September 8, 2024
30	Accessibility Sunday	November 3, 2024
31	HIV/AIDS Awareness	December 1, 2024
32	United Voices for Children	Every 5th Sunday
33		(January, April, July, October, December)

34
35 * This fund supports Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire, 4-H, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and
36 Amachi programs.

1 **Document 650.01**
 2 **NAME: MINIMUM SALARIES FOR FULL-TIME CLERGY**
 3 **SUBMITTED BY: CCFA Task Force on Equitable Compensation**

4
 5 **ACTION:**

6
 7 1) Minimum salaries for full-time clergy appointed in the NIC will be as follows, showing an
 8 increase of 1.5% for the next fiscal year:
 9

	YEAR OF INITIAL APPOINTMENT						
	(minimum salary set at the beginning of a new appointment, typically July 1)						
	2018 (\$34,450)	2019 (\$34,800)	2020 (\$35,300)	2021 (\$36,360)	2022 (\$36,360)	2023 (\$37,500)	2024 (\$38,063)
Resolution passed in:							
2018 for FY 2019	\$34,795						
2019 for FY 2020	\$35,282	\$35,287					
2020 for FY 2021	\$36,341	\$36,346	\$36,359				
2021 for FY 2022	\$36,341	\$36,346	\$36,359	\$36,360			
2022 for FY 2023	\$37,431	\$37,436	\$37,449	\$37,450	\$37,450		
Proposed in 2023 for FY 2024	\$37,992	\$37,998	\$38,011	\$38,012	\$38,012	\$38,063	

10
 11 *Chart interpretation: Each year, a minimum salary is set for new appointments. This salary amount is*
 12 *listed in the first row, beneath the year the new appointment is made (which typically begins July 1.) A*
 13 *minimum salary is recommended for multiple-year appointments. The number listed in the column*
 14 *beneath each year indicates the minimum salary for the pastor in the year that the appointment was first*
 15 *made. Numbers in bold print in the bottom row are the minimum salaries recommended to the Annual*
 16 *Conference in 2023.*

17
 18 2) Local churches are to provide a minimum of \$5,500* for accountable reimbursements for
 19 their appointed pastor. This covers the costs related to travel, continuing education, and
 20 other expenses incurred in the course of providing pastoral ministry. Information about
 21 accountable reimbursements can be found at: Accountable Reimbursement Policy Q&A
 22 *This year we continue the recommendation of \$5,500 to take into account high fuel costs.

1 **RATIONALE:**

2 While the cost of living adjustment (COLA) established by the SSA for 2023 is 8.7%, CCFA is
3 recommending an increase in minimum required salaries of 1.5%, with the following rationale
4 and comments:

- 5
- 6 ● A portion of the COLA is due to rising energy/utility and housing costs; costs already
7 largely assumed by churches as they provide utility-covered parsonages to clergy as
8 well as reimbursement for travel expenses. (see Action point 2 above for details.)
9
 - 10 ● As well, health insurance premiums continue to be fully covered by the local churches at
11 a current yearly cost of \$19,560 (which may increase slightly in 2024). This benefit
12 makes the overall compensation package of full-time clergy in the NIC comparable to
13 other conferences in the NCJ.
14
 - 15 ● Together with base compensation, church-paid health insurance premiums, accountable
16 reimbursements, and church-paid pension contributions, the total minimum
17 compensation package for full-time clergy is \$69,213. In addition to this, churches
18 provide housing through utility-covered parsonages or cash housing allowances, which
19 completes the compensation package. This total has become increasingly difficult for
20 un-yoked churches to maintain full-time clergy. The NIC seeks to maintain as many full-
21 time appointments as possible to fulfill the guarantee of a full-time appointment for our
22 commissioned and ordained elders. As a result, we may continue to see an increase in
23 multiple-point charges for full-time clergy to serve.
24
25

1 **Document Number: 680.01**

2
3 **Name: Benefit Programs**

4 **Author(s): Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits**

5 **CCFA: No action required**

6
7 Action:

8 The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits, partnering with Wespath recommends
9 the following policies for clergy and other eligible participants enrolled in welfare, health and
10 pension benefits.

11
12 **I. Health Insurance**

13 The Conference Board of Pensions recommends that the Annual Conference establish the
14 following policies and procedures for administration of the Conference Health Care Program,
15 effective January 1, 2024.

16
17 **A. Mandatory Coverage**

18 1. The following categories of employees are mandated to participate in the Annual Conference
19 health insurance program. In all cases, the spouses, and dependents (such as children) of
20 eligible employees may enroll in the health plan at the election of the participant.
21

Category	<i>Discipline 2016</i>
Elder in full connection (including those from another Methodist denomination and those from another conference) appointed to full-time service to a conference local church or campus ministry	338.1, 346.1, .2, &,3
Associate member appointed to full-time service	321
Provisional Members on elder track appointed to full-time local church service	326.2
A full-time local pastor who is under Episcopal appointment to a charge located in the conference	318.1

22
23 2. Elders appointed to disability status prior to age 65 will be covered under the conference
24 plan at the cost of the Conference Board of Pensions and health benefits until they are
25 eligible for Medicare or for Social Security disability coverage. At age 65 from a premium
26 payment standpoint, each will be treated as retired pastors and subject to the HRA
27 guidelines explained in Section D of this Resolution.

28
29 **B. Release from Mandatory Coverage - THE PILOT PROGRAM**

30 1. Clergy members may waive mandatory coverage only with the consent of the Conference
31 Board of Pensions when enrolled in an Affordable Care Act plan, Medicare, Tricare,
32 CHAMPUS, or on a plan provided by a spouse's employer. The objective of allowing Churches
33 to opt out of HealthFlex is to provide a means to help Churches lower the cost of medical
34 insurance and be able to maintain the promised medical benefit to NIC pastors. To elect this
35 option the Churches agree to the following:

- 1 a) Agree to pay the monthly health care premium established by the Conference Board of
2 Pensions.
3 b) Each quarter the Church will receive a rebate of one month's premium.
4 c) The clergy person will receive a reimbursement check from the conference equal to the
5 amount of the alternative coverage and an estimate of the taxes owed for the amount.
6 The maximum amount the Conference Board of Pensions will provide in cash is \$1,000
7 per month to support clergy to enroll with an alternative carrier and to help pay for
8 additional personal taxes. The amount provided by the Conference is considered as
9 taxable cash compensation.
10 d) If Churches fail to make premium payments the Conference holds the right to
11 discontinue the cash support provided to the pastors.
12

13 **C. Local Church and Extension Ministry Coverage Options**

14 1. A local church or extension ministry may elect health insurance in the conference plan
15 available to participants in the following categories **who meet the required eligibility criteria:**
16

Category	Discipline 2016	Premium Billed to
Ordained elder appointed to extension ministries within the connectional structure (other than a unit of the conference or general agency), within an ecumenical agency, within a GBHEM endorsed extension ministry or within a special ministry outside the connectional structure	344.1a(3), 344.1a(4), 344.1b, 344.1d	Salary Paying Unit
Ordained elder from another denomination (other than UMC) appointed to half-time or more service to a Conference local church or a unit of the Conference	346.2, 346.3, 338.2, 346.1	Salary Paying Unit
Provisional, Associate or full clergy member granted voluntary leave of absence not to exceed 1 year	354.1 354.2	Participant
Clergy member granted Sabbatical Leave from a local church appointment for up to one year if enrolled in the health program at time of request and Board of Ordained Ministry designates a premium paying unit with their approval.	351	Board of Ordained Ministry or participant
Elder of the Annual Conference granted Medical leave from an appointment to an NIC local church or within the connectional structure for up to one year.	357	Board of Pensions
Deacon in full connection appointed to full-time basis in a conference local church, beyond the local church, or UMC related agencies and schools.	331.1a, 331.1b	Salary Paying Unit
A Provisional member on the Deacon track appointed to serve on a full time basis to an NIC congregation or to the conference.	326.1	Salary Paying Unit
75% of eligible Lay Employees of a local church in the conference normally scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week inclusive of a calendar year		Salary Paying Unit

- 1 2. In accord with Illinois law, state recognized civil union partners of lay or clergy
- 2 employees are eligible for coverage in a manner similar to spouses.
- 3 3. The decision to offer coverage is made by the salary paying unit. The choice to accept
- 4 the offer of coverage shall be made by the participant. The salary paying unit may elect to
- 5 offer health insurance to one or all categories of persons listed above in Section C. 1. The
- 6 salary paying unit must make health insurance available to and will be billed for all persons
- 7 within any specific category employed with the agency or local church. Failure to make
- 8 prompt payment results in termination of the participant in the plan.
- 9 4. Each salary paying unit must execute annually a sub-adoption agreement with the
- 10 annual conference, should they desire to offer health coverage to persons in these categories.
- 11 5. These categories of persons are also eligible for coverage :

Category	Billed for Active's Premium
Surviving spouse or dependent children enrolled in the health plan at time of a participant's death for a period of up to one year	Participant pays 25%, Salary Paying Unit (or Board of Pensions) 75%
Divorced spouse enrolled in the plan at time of divorce for 2 years or in accordance with State and Federal law or court order	Divorced Spouse

12
13 **D. Retirement Health Administration -**

- 14 1. For 2024, the Conference extends a program of support for some retired clergy persons
- 15 in continued clergy relationship to the Conference. The program commitment is for one
- 16 year only and is a nonvested benefit to certain clergy retirees of the annual conference.
- 17 To qualify, the retired clergy person must be a member of the Conference on January 1,
- 18 2024, or be a dependent of a current clergy member or surviving spouse of a clergy
- 19 person in good standing at the time of death
- 20 2. Clergy persons enrolled in the health plan or participating in the pilot program (Section
- 21 B, above) at Mandatory Retirement (Discipline paragraph 357.1), Early Retirement
- 22 (Discipline paragraph 357.2b), Full Retirement (Discipline Paragraph 357.2c), or
- 23 Involuntary Retirement (Discipline paragraph 357.3) may be eligible for health benefits
- 24 in retirement through the conference plan if such enrollment or participation is for the
- 25 continuous five years prior to retirement. No clergy member retiring under the "20
- 26 year rule" (Discipline paragraph 357.2a) is eligible for retiree health coverage.
- 27 3. A clergy spouse (or surviving spouse after death of an active member) enrolled in the
- 28 health plan 5 consecutive years before retirement or enrolled when first eligible for
- 29 coverage (when prior to participant's retirement) is eligible for coverage after retirement.
- 30 The family status of the participant cannot change during retirement, except in cases of
- 31 adoption, childbirth or death. Participants electing to not participate in retirement
- 32 health plan at time of retirement may not elect to enroll at a later time.
- 33 4. Upon retirement the annual conference shall establish a Health Reimbursement Account
- 34 (HRA) for the household in the retiree's name. Participants and their spouses who meet
- 35 the retiree eligibility rules may use HRA funds to pay for medical expenses including
- 36 premiums, co-pays, deductibles, dental services, medical services, coinsurance, etc. Like
- 37 a savings account, the funds do not need to be expended by the end of the calendar year
- 38 and balances roll forward when unused.
- 39 5. For 2024, the annual conference will provide a benefit equal to \$100 per year of
- 40 ministerial service (as limited by I.D.7. below). An additional \$100 per year of service is

1 also extended to the Pastor's spouse. This amount is subject to change in future years
2 based on the needs and circumstances of the Conference and/or participants.

- 3 6. Only the first 40 years of service shall be tabulated when determining the amount of
4 benefit. In the case of clergy couples, the clergy member with the highest number of
5 years of service, up to the cap of 40, shall determine the benefit amount.
- 6 7. Ministerial service years are determined by the Conference Board of Pensions and
7 Health Benefits. Only years served under appointment to Northern Illinois Conference
8 local churches or connectional structure are considered in the HRA calculation. Special
9 exceptions may be made based on approval by NIC Board of Pensions. Any counting of
10 service years earned by service to non-Northern Illinois Conference appointments
11 recognized in prior years will not be recognized effective January 1, 2024 or after.
- 12 8. The Conference at the discretion of their Board of Pension has the right to change or
13 modify the retiree benefit and or contributions at any time. The annual conference does
14 not make a commitment to additional funding in future years.
- 15 9. Full Time Lay Conference employees of the annual conference with 5 continuous years
16 of coverage before retirement will have a contribution equal to \$100 per year of service
17 to the annual conference deposited in their HRA annually. Eligibility for the HRA is
18 contingent on a participant's enrollment in Medicare B and engagement with the
19 Conference's selected provider.
- 20 10. The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits engages Via Benefits to aid clergy
21 retirees aged 65 and above in selection of suitable Medicare supplement coverage and to
22 act as a patient advocate when necessary. To receive the HRA benefit eligible
23 participants must enroll through the Via Benefits program and be enrolled in Medicare B.
24 Clergy who retire prior to 65 and meet the eligibility rules will have the HRA equivalent
25 deducted from the cost of their conference provided medical coverage until they reach
26 Medicare eligibility, enroll in Medicare B and enroll in Supplemental programs through
27 Via Benefits. Retired clergy will be responsible for costs of coverage in excess of that
28 HRA amount.

29 30 **E. Active Health Administration**

- 31 1. Monthly premiums are billed to each charge or salary-paying unit at rates established by
32 the Conference Board of Pensions. Premiums are due the first of each month. Accounts
33 90 days in arrears are subject to termination as explained in the arrearage policy
34 approved by the Board and the NIC Cabinet. This policy describes the efforts that will
35 be made by the Conference office and the Cabinet to work with Churches that are more
36 than 90 days in arrears. If all efforts to receive payment or develop a payment plan have
37 been exhausted, then termination of coverage may be the final option. Notification of
38 accounts in arrears will be provided to the District Superintendent, the pastor, the local
39 church PPRC chair, and the local church treasurer prior to termination. Any unpaid
40 clergy benefit invoices shall be collected from the sale of a closed church when sold by
41 the Conference Trustees, and, requested from the proceeds of church building sales in
42 local church mergers.
- 43 2. If a participant enrolls in one of the HealthFlex Exchange programs that require a
44 payroll deduction to the Conference and those deductions are not made the Conference
45 can have the participant placed in a plan that does not require a payroll deduction.
- 46 3. Churches should care that tax reporting is correctly administered for all payroll
47 deductions around health insurance provisions.

4. Active participants are able to make choices in the provision of their coverage through the enrollment period, as made available through Healthflex administration. Problem resolution and inquiries regarding coverage should be directed to the HealthFlex Team at Wespath 1-800-851-2201.

II. Pension Programs

- A. **Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) Eligibility.** The General Conference of the United Methodist Church established the CRSP as the primary pension program for United Methodist clergy in 2007. Mandatory participation is required when both 1 and 2 are met:
 1. The clergy member relationship to the conference is as a:
 - a. Commissioned Members (Deacon or Elder)
 - b. Elders in Full Connection
 - c. Members of Other Conferences appointed in the Northern Illinois Conference (paragraph 346.1 appointments)
 - d. Full Time Local Pastors
 - e. Deacons in Full Connection
 - f. Members of other denomination, appointed to service in an NIC local church if no other pension is provided by their denomination.
 2. The clergy member is under Episcopal appointment half-time or more to the following service types:
 - a. to local churches in the Northern Illinois Conference
 - b. to the Conference (staff or Cabinet)
 - c. to a Conference controlled entity (such as a campus ministry or ORM)
 - d. to Incapacity leave with CPP benefits
 3. In order to waive participation, a half-time or more appointed clergy member must sign a waiver form at time of appointment. Please note that persons assigned, but not appointed are not eligible in the program.
 4. Local churches are encouraged to enroll as a plan sponsor of UMPIP and to make employer contributions into the accounts of clergy appointed quarter-time.

B. Clergy Retirement Security Program.

1. **Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).** The Comprehensive Protection Plan is the primary death and disability benefit for enrolled clergy. The billing rate for CPP will be established by the Conference office. Appointments with compensation less than full time and those that were considered under special arrangements will be covered and billed based on rates established by UMLifeOptions.
2. **CRSP - Defined Contribution**
 - a. The CRSP pension program includes a defined contribution component. Each clergy member will have 2% of plan compensation deposited in an individual account at the Wespath. All contributions into the account are invested and the enrolled clergy member receives the appreciated value of the account upon retirement.
 - b. Clergy persons are encouraged to contribute 1% of their plan compensation into their UMPIP account as a salary deduction. The annual conference will match the first 1% of UMPIP contributions paid into the participants CRSP-DC account.
3. **CRSP - Defined Benefit program.** With the defined benefit component each enrolled clergy member will receive a monthly cash benefit from the plan upon retirement.

1 Funds collected from local churches are used for annual contributions made by the
2 conference will be invested by Wespath so that the NIC obligation can be met. A
3 portion of defined benefit funding may accrue to a reserve fund for funding future
4 variation in market results and other benefits to retirees and future retirees.

5 **C. Billing Methods.** The Annual Conference will invoice local churches monthly **16% (3%**
6 **(CPP) + 3% (CRSP DC) + 10% (CRSP DB)** based on clergy plan compensation required for
7 support of the CRSP and CPP programs. Increases may be necessary in the future.
8

9 **D.Pre-82 Defined Benefit Past Service Rate for 2021**

10 1. The Conference Board of Pensions recommends that the annual pension rate for
11 service prior to 1982, effective January 1, 2024, be \$605 per service year, an increase of 0% from
12 2023. Surviving spouses shall be supported at the rate of 85% of participant pension benefit
13 amounts. Special grants will be provided as identified in Section F.
14

15 **E. Excludable Housing allowance for retired clergy.** In accordance with the Private Ruling
16 Letter from the Internal Revenue Service, the Northern Illinois Conference Annual Conference
17 Session reaffirms the limits to housing allowance exclusion for retired and disabled clergy
18 found in the Standing Rules, at Section IV. C. 1, which states: *Disabled clergy have the same legal*
19 *relationship to an Annual Conference as do the retired clergy and, thus, this Conference is also the*
20 *appropriate organization to designate a housing/rental allowance for disabled ordained or local pastors*
21 *who are members of this Conference. An amount equal to 100% of the pension payments received by a*
22 *retired clergy, or 100% of the disability payments received by a disabled clergy, is designated as*
23 *rental/housing allowance respectively for each retired or disabled ordained or local pastor of The United*
24 *Methodist Church who is or was a member of the Northern Illinois Conference at the time of retirement*
25 *or disability.*
26

27 **F. Special Grants**

- 28 1 Beginning in 2020 Northern Illinois Conference Session the Board of Pensions approved
29 grants for participants meeting the following eligibility criteria:
30 a. Members of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference who retired from an
31 appointment in the conference;
32 b. Who have at least 15 years of service prior to 1982 compensated at the Past
33 Service Rate (excludes those at the DBSM rate); and,
34 c. Who have less than 10 years of service to Northern Illinois Conference
35 appointments served while enrolled in the MPP program.
36 2. For 1/1/2024 the amount provided to eligible participants will be \$700 times their pre-
37 82 years of service calculated at the PSR. This amount will remain in place until
38 otherwise changed by the Board of Pensions
39 3. The Conference Board of Pensions also recommends that a special grant be made to
40 James W. French for his 3.5 years of service with this Annual Conference from June 1,
41 1978 through December 31, 1981. We recommend for the year commencing July 1, 2023
42 to June 30, 2024, a grant of \$140.95 monthly be paid based on the present pension rate,
43 but actuarially reduced since payments are starting prior to full retirement age.

44 **III. Group Life Insurance**

45 The Conference Board of Pensions enrolls in the UMLifeOptions program. Every eligible
46 retired clergy person will be enrolled in the plan with a benefit of \$5,000 at no cost to the

1 participant. Active clergy persons have \$10,000 in coverage at the NIC expense when an
2 application is filed during the open enrollment period. Coverage beyond this amount is at the
3 cost of the participant and will be billed directly from UMLifeOptions.

1 Document 700.01
2 Name: Discontinuance of Chicago: Grace Calvary UMC
3 Author: District Superintendent, Jacques Conway
4 Lake South District, UMC
5 CCFA Action: _____
6

7 **ACTION:**

8 WHEREAS the **Chicago: Grace Calvary UMC**, located in the City of **Chicago**,
9 **Illinois at the commonly known address 7800 S. Loomis Blvd.** in
10 **Chicago** Township of **Cook** County, Illinois was formed and has witnessed to Jesus
11 Christ and served its community and the world for having closed on July 1, 2023;
12 and
13

14 WHEREAS the **Chicago: Grace Calvary UMC** faithfully served the community in
15 the Village of **Chicago, IL** and boldly risked themselves in this effort; and
16

17 WHEREAS, pursuant to the provision of Paragraph 2549 of *The Book of Discipline of*
18 *The United Methodist Church 2016*, the **Lake South** District Superintendent has
19 recommended with the approval of the District Strategy Team that the church be
20 discontinued effective **July 1, 2023**. The Prairie South District Committee on
21 Building and Location has voted to concur with the District Superintendent's
22 recommendation to discontinue said church and the presiding Bishop and the
23 majority of the District Superintendents of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference
24 of The United Methodist Church have consented to the District Superintendent's
25 recommendation to discontinue said church;
26

27 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, to minimize the risk of loss of future bequests
28 to the Conference, the Northern Illinois Annual Conference recommends that the
29 said Church, though discontinued under the Canon Law of The United Methodist
30 Church, nevertheless be maintained in perpetuity under the Illinois civil law by
31 adopting a reincorporation thereof by the Bishop under Section 46b of the Illinois
32 Religious Corporation Act, with the incumbent Conference Board of Trustees
33 names as trustees of the Discontinued Church under the procedure established by
34 Article VII "Discontinued or Abandoned Church Reincorporation" of the By-laws
35 of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church; and
36

37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the said Church shall be
38 transferred to **Chicago: Grace Calvary UMC** in **Chicago**, Illinois, unless any such
39 members shall inform the pastor of the transferee church otherwise; and
40

41 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the appropriate officers of The Northern Illinois
42 Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church are authorized and directed to
43 execute on behalf of the said Conference any and all such additional documents as
44 legal counsel shall recommend to effectuate the above.
45

46 **RATIONALE:**

47 After many faithful years of service, ministry and mission in the name of Jesus
48 Christ, **Chicago: Grace Calvary UMC** has come to a place of transition and closure

1 as membership and attendance have declined. The congregation has expressed its
2 desire to celebrate its past ministry but to no longer remain in service as **Chicago:**
3 **Grace Calvary UMC**. The closure has been recommended by the **Lake South**
4 District Strategy Team, the **Tommy Taylor Jr**; Board on Church Location and
5 Buildings and the District Superintendent.

1 **Document 700.02**
2 **Name: Discontinuance of CHICAGO: EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
3 **Author: District Superintendent, Rev. Brittany Isaac, Lake North District**
4 **CCFA Action: _____**
5

6 **ACTION:**

7 WHEREAS the CHICAGO: EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH,
8 located in the City of Chicago, Cook County, Illinois, was formed in 1889 and
9 has witnessed to Jesus Christ and served its community and the world for
10 nearly 134 years; and

11
12 WHEREAS the CHICAGO: EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
13 faithfully served the community in the City of Chicago and boldly risked
14 themselves in this effort; and

15
16 WHEREAS, pursuant to the provision of Paragraph 2549 of *The Book of*
17 *Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*, the Lake North District
18 Superintendent has recommended with the approval of the District Strategy
19 Team that the church be discontinued effective DECEMBER 31, 2022. The Lake
20 North District Committee on Building and Location has voted to concur with
21 the District Superintendent's recommendation to discontinue said church and
22 the presiding Bishop and the majority of the District Superintendents of the
23 Northern Illinois Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church have
24 consented to the District Superintendent's recommendation to discontinue said
25 church; and

26
27 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that to minimize the risk of loss of future
28 bequests to the Conference, the Northern Illinois Annual Conference
29 recommends that the said Church, though discontinued under the Canon Law
30 of The United Methodist Church, nevertheless be maintained in perpetuity
31 under the Illinois civil law by adopting a reincorporation thereof by the Bishop
32 under Section 46b of the Illinois Religious Corporation Act, with the incumbent
33 Conference Board of Trustees names as trustees of the Discontinued Church
34 under the procedure established by Article VII "Discontinued or Abandoned
35 Church Reincorporation" of the By-laws of the Northern Illinois Annual
36 Conference of The United Methodist Church; and

37
38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all properties and assets of said Church,
39 including, but not limited to its existing and future gifts, devises, and bequests,
40 its existing personal property and accounts and its real property commonly
41 known as 5253 N. Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, IL 60640, shall become the
42 properties and assets of the Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist
43 Church, and shall, in the discretion of the Bishop, in consultation with the
44 Cabinet, be either:

- 45 a. Retained by the reincorporated shell Illinois religious corporation
46 referred to above pending sale or other disposition; or

1 b. Transferred to the Board of Trustees of the Northern Illinois Annual
2 Conference of The United Methodist Church; and

3
4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Northern Illinois
5 Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church be authorized and
6 directed to provide for the care, maintenance, and disposition of the said assets
7 and shall dispose of said assets in accordance with the relevant provisions of
8 The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016; and that any
9 monies or other assets received from the sale or other disposition of the assets
10 of said discontinued Church be used to pay off all monetary obligations and
11 arrearages with any remaining monies to be deposited in the Closed Church
12 Fund as directed by Standing Rule 11, Part A, Section V of the Standing Rules
13 of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church;
14 and

15
16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the said Church shall be
17 transferred to the UNITED CHURCH OF ROGERS PARK in Chicago, Illinois
18 unless any such members shall inform the pastor of the transferee church
19 otherwise; and

20
21 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the appropriate officers of The Northern
22 Illinois Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church are authorized and
23 directed to execute on behalf of the said Conference any and all such additional
24 documents as legal counsel shall recommend to effectuate the above.

25
26 RATIONALE:

27 After many faithful years of service, ministry and mission in the name of Jesus
28 Christ, CHICAGO: EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH has come to a
29 place of transition and closure as membership and attendance have declined.
30 The congregation has expressed its desire to celebrate its past ministry but to no
31 longer remain in service as EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. The
32 closure has been recommended by the Lake North District Strategy Team, the
33 Lake North District Board on Church Location and Buildings and the District
34 Superintendent.

1 **Document: 700.03**
2 **Name: Discontinuance of Sterling: Trinity UMC**
3 **Author: District Superintendent, Brian Gilbert, Prairie South**
4 **CCFA Action: _____**
5

6 **ACTION:**

7 WHEREAS the **Sterling: Trinity UMC** located in the City of **Sterling, Illinois** at
8 **the commonly known address of 205 E.10th Street** in **Sterling** Township of
9 **Sterling** County, Illinois, was formed and has witnessed to Jesus Christ and served
10 its community and the world for having closed on July 1, 2023; and
11

12 WHEREAS the **Sterling: Trinity UMC** faithfully served the community in the
13 Village of Sterling, IL and boldly risked themselves in this effort; and
14

15 WHEREAS, pursuant to the provision of Paragraph 2549 of *The Book of Discipline of*
16 *The United Methodist Church 2016*, the **Prairie South** District Superintendent has
17 recommended with the approval of the District Strategy Team that the church be
18 discontinued effective **July 1, 2023**. The Prairie South District Committee on
19 Building and Location has voted to concur with the District Superintendent's
20 recommendation to discontinue said church and the presiding Bishop and the
21 majority of the District Superintendents of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference
22 of The United Methodist Church have consented to the District Superintendent's
23 recommendation to discontinue said church; and
24

25 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, to minimize the risk of loss of future bequests
26 to the Conference, the Northern Illinois Annual Conference recommends that the
27 said Church, though discontinued under the Canon Law of The United Methodist
28 Church, nevertheless be maintained in perpetuity under the Illinois civil law by
29 adopting a reincorporation thereof by the Bishop under Section 46b of the Illinois
30 Religious Corporation Act, with the incumbent Conference Board of Trustees
31 names as trustees of the Discontinued Church under the procedure established by
32 Article VII "Discontinued or Abandoned Church Reincorporation" of the By-laws
33 of the Northern Illinois Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church; and
34

35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of said Church shall be transferred
36 to **Sterling: Trinity UMC** in **Sterling, Illinois**, unless any such members shall
37 inform the pastor of the transferee church otherwise; and
38

39 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the appropriate officers of The Northern Illinois
40 Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church are authorized and directed to
41 execute on behalf of the said Conference any and all such additional documents as
42 legal counsel shall recommend to effectuate the above.
43

44 **RATIONALE:**

45 After many faithful years of service, ministry and mission in the name of Jesus
46 Christ, **Sterling: Trinity UMC** has come to a place of transition and closure as
47 membership and attendance have declined. The congregation has expressed its
48 desire to celebrate its past ministry but to no longer remain in service as **Sterling:**

1 **Trinity UMC.** The closure has been recommended by the **Prairie South** District
2 Strategy Team, the Gilford Larimer, Jr. Board on Church Location and Buildings
3 and the District Superintendent.
4

1 **Document: 700.04**
2 **Document Name: Affirmation of the Queer Delegates' Call to Center Justice and**
3 **Empowerment for LGBTQIA+ People in the UMC**
4 **Authors: NIC Church and Society, Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC MFSA Luis F. Reyes and Elisa**
5 **Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa Gatz, co-facilitators, NIC**
6 **General/Jurisdictional Delegation, Alka Lyall, chair**

7
8 Action:

9 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference:

- 10 1. Supports and amplifies the queer delegates' call to justice and empowerment for the
11 LGBTQIA+ community throughout the Northern Illinois Annual Conference, within
12 and beyond our local churches, districts, departments, centers, and committees;
- 13 2. Affirms the spirit of the abeyance or moratorium as proposed to the General Conference,
14 as referenced above, until changes can be made in The United Methodist Book of
15 Discipline;
- 16 3. Implores our Annual Conference to either not pursue, hold in abeyance, or resolve in a
17 timely fashion through a process of just resolution, any complaints against clergy
18 regarding their sexual orientation or the officiating of weddings of LGBTQIA+ persons;
- 19 4. Aspires to become a United Methodist Church in which LGBTQIA+ people will be
20 protected, affirmed, and empowered throughout our life, mission, and ministry
21 together.

22
23 Rationale:

24 In a groundswell response to the passage of harmful legislation at the 2019 Special Session of
25 General Conference, Annual Conferences elected queer clergy and lay persons to be General
26 and Jurisdictional Delegates in record numbers, for the first time empowering queer delegates
27 to speak and act from our diverse experiences. The 2019 Special Session of the United Methodist
28 General Conference passed the Traditional Plan, which increased penalties for United
29 Methodist clergy who are LGBTQIA+ and for clergy who support the LGBTQIA+ community
30 through officiating their weddings.

31
32 In an attempt to address the divide within The United Methodist Church, an abeyance or
33 moratorium was proposed to the General Conference, referenced below,² by the authors of the
34 Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation. We understand our call and
35 responsibility as United Methodists to do good, do no harm, and stay in love with God. We call
36 straight and cisgender allies to do good by using their voice and vote to support, empower, and
37 amplify the voices of the LGBTQIA+ community in The United Methodist Church. Forty-six
38 queer General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates from across all five jurisdictions wrote
39 the original resolution we are affirming, which was historically adopted at all five jurisdictional
40 conferences in November 2022.

1 **Document: 700.05**

2 **Name: Concerning the Rise of Child Labor in the USA**

3 **Authors:** Rachel Birkhahn-Rommelfanger; NIC Church and Society, Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC
4 MFSA, Luis F. Reyes and Elisa Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN, Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa
5 Gatz, co-facilitators; Rockford Urban Ministries, Violet Johnicker, Associate Director; John Bell;
6 Charles Straight; Lucas Pepper

7
8 **Action**

9 The Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church:

- 10 • condemns the flagrant disregard and violation, by corporations and businesses across
11 the United States of America, of child labor laws, including limits on shift lengths,
12 restrictions on industries, and other policies that are in place to protect children’s well-
13 being and safety;
- 14 • condemns recent actions by state legislators and governors across the United States of
15 America who are seeking to roll back or weaken child labor laws because employers are
16 not paying enough or providing attractive enough working conditions to attract and
17 retain adult workers;
- 18 • encourages our churches to lift up workers in prayer and to reaffirm our belief in
19 workers’ rights on the Sunday nearest Labor Day or May Day;
- 20 • reaffirms our support for 2016 UMC Book of Resolution item 4135 - Rights of Workers,
21 and encourages local churches to study and discuss this document;
- 22 • encourages the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits to continue to invest in
23 companies that set high standards for treatment of workers, especially children,
24 throughout the world and to file or join shareholder resolutions that encourage the
25 abolition of child labor;
- 26 • calls upon our clergy, laity, congregations, and community members to speak to elected
27 officials at all levels of government about:
 - 28 ○ our opposition to child labor and to legislation that might weaken current
 - 29 prohibitions of child labor,
 - 30 ○ support for new policies, practices or laws that curb the use of child labor and
 - 31 crack down on violators, and
 - 32 ○ the long history of our denomination in standing for the rights of children and
 - 33 workers.

34
35 **Rationale**

36 Children are working in every industry in every state, and businesses are flouting child labor
37 laws that have been in place for nearly a century, laws that the United Methodist Church and its
38 predecessors aided in advancing.

39
40 In the Department of Labor's last fiscal year, 2021 through 2022, 835 companies were found to
41 have employed more than 3,800 children in violation of federal labor laws. Child labor
42 violations include not only situations involving hazardous work, but also cases of minors
43 working schedules far longer and later than what’s legally permissible.

44
45 In February, the Department of Labor announced that it had discovered 102 teenagers between
46 the ages of 13 and 17 working in hazardous conditions for a company that cleans meatpacking

1 equipment at factories around the country. In other places we are seeing child roofers,
2 construction workers, packagers in food factories and other jobs across dangerous industries.

3
4 Reports by New York Times and Reuters found that most of these workers are migrant
5 children, who have been coming into the United States without their parents in record numbers.
6 These children are ending up in some of the most punishing and hazardous jobs in the country.
7 The United Methodist Church is clear in its convictions that work is a means of stewardship
8 and God-given creativity, and that all human beings deserve dignity and justice in the
9 workplace.

10
11 In 1908, The Methodist Episcopal Church, a predecessor of The United Methodist Church,
12 adopted a Social Creed that was all about support for the workers in our world. The creed
13 called, "For equal rights and complete justice for all (people) in all stations of life....for the
14 protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational diseases, injuries and
15 mortality...for the abolition of child labor."¹

16
17 Today, children and teens are exposed to dangerous machinery, occupational diseases, injuries,
18 and mortality as they are illegally working jobs like construction, meat packing, factory work,
19 and other roles where children and teens are prohibited by law.

20
21 Our Social Principles contain the following about children: "Once considered the property of
22 their parents, children are now acknowledged to be full human beings in their own right, but
23 beings to whom adults and society in general have special obligations ...Moreover, children
24 have the rights to food, shelter, clothing, health care, and emotional well-being as do adults... In
25 particular, children must be protected from economic, physical, emotional, and sexual
26 exploitation and abuse."

27
28 Jesus' words in Matthew 19:14 tell us that the Kingdom of heaven belongs to the children, and
29 thus we have an obligation and call from our Lord to care for children.

30
31 In the 2016 Book of Resolutions, item 4135 affirms the rights of workers, and specifically that
32 "The United Methodist Church: supports the conventions of the International Labor
33 Organizations that advance safety in the workplace; freedom from bonded or forced labor;...
34 **effective abolition of child labor**; fair compensation; just supervision; and the right of
35 collective action for employees in all nations. The United Methodist Church shall continue to
36 seek ratification and enforcement of these conventions."

37
38 We encourage our churches to study the emerging and on-going crisis of child labor in the
39 United States using or adapting lesson plans and resources from the New York Times exposé on
40 the topic found at [https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/12/learning/lesson-plans/lesson-plan-](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/12/learning/lesson-plans/lesson-plan-a-new-child-labor-crisis-in-america.html)
41 [a-new-child-labor-crisis-in-america.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/12/learning/lesson-plans/lesson-plan-a-new-child-labor-crisis-in-america.html) or other reliable sources.

¹ <https://www.umcjustice.org/who-we-are/social-principles-and-resolutions/the-1908-social-creed-of-the-methodist-episcopal-church#:~:text=The%20Methodist%20Episcopal%20Church%2C%20a,fair%20wage%20and%20safety%20standards.&text=For%20equal%20rights%20and%20complete,in%20all%20stations%20of%20life.>

1 **Document: 700.06**
2 **Name: Concerning the Current State of Attacks on Transgender People in The United States**
3 **Authors:** Rachel Birkhahn-Rommelfanger; NIC Church and Society, Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC
4 MFSA, Luis F. Reyes and Elisa Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN, Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa
5 Gatz, co-facilitators; Rockford Urban Ministries, Violet Johnicker, Associate Director; John Bell;
6 Charles Straight; Lucas Pepper
7

8 **Action**

9 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

- 10 • opposes the proliferation of bills across the United States targeting transgender people
11 that restrict access to health care, bathrooms, the joining of sport teams and other rights
12 and freedoms. We condemn rhetoric that portrays trans & non-binary people as
13 dangerous or unworthy of love and respect;
- 14 • calls upon our congregations and clergy to speak out for the rights of trans & non-binary
15 people, and to boldly declare that trans & non-binary people are deserving of love,
16 dignity, respect, compassion, and to remember that The United Methodist Social
17 Principles affirms “that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image
18 of God”;
- 19 • urges our Bishop, Cabinet, and conference leadership to publicly speak out, sign letters
20 or petitions, author op-eds, and advocate for the rights of trans & non-binary people;
- 21 • urges the Council of Bishops to make a public statement condemning the anti-trans bills
22 being presented across the country;
- 23 • encourages our churches to participate in activities that honor the International
24 Transgender Day of Visibility (March 31), and International Transgender Day of
25 Remembrance (November 20);
- 26 • invites our congregations to consider hosting drop-in centers and other supportive
27 programs for LGBTQ+ youth in our church buildings; and
- 28 • implores our clergy, laity, and community members to call, write, or set up meetings
29 with their elected officials at all levels of government to share our support for the
30 sacredness of trans and non-binary people and condemn laws restricting the rights of
31 trans & non-binary people.

32 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference’s secretary shall send this resolution condemning
33 the large number of anti-trans bills to other Annual Conferences and to the Commission on
34 the General Conference for the next General Conference.

35

36 **Rationale**

37 As of March 2023, over 400 anti-trans bills have already been introduced in states across the
38 United States. By comparison, between 2018 and 2022, state legislators introduced at least 361
39 anti-LGBTQ bills total, making 2023 a record year for anti-trans hate.

40 Many of these bills, and the rhetoric surrounding them, portray trans & non-binary people as
41 dangerous and conflate the demands of trans & non-binary people to be treated with dignity

1 and respect with the actions of cis-phobic hate groups. Likewise, cries for justice and equity are
2 portrayed as vitriol and violence against cis-gender people.

3 As written, these bills will block access to healthcare, limit access to bathrooms and restrict the
4 ability to join sports teams, and restrict drag shows. They represent an attempt to remove
5 transgender people from protection under the law and from public life; and, these restrictions
6 are a threat to the freedom that every person deserves.

7 Bloomberg News reports that, “anti-LGBTQ hate crimes in the USA are on the rise...nearly 200
8 anti-LGBTQ incidents (reported) in 2022, were three times the amount reported in 2021.
9 ...Williams Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles’s School of Law, noted that
10 around one in 10 incidents targeting LGBTQ people are trans hate crimes, and (trans people are)
11 nine times more likely than their heterosexual, cisgender peers to be the victim of a violent hate
12 crime.”¹

13 This attempted eradication and restriction or removal of freedoms will not stop at trans & non-
14 binary people. At this same moment, we see reproductive rights under attack, the banning of
15 books that share stories of LGBTQ, Black, Brown, Indigenous, and Asian perspectives; a re-
16 writing of our USA history to omit historical truths that some find uncomfortable; and an
17 attempt to erase Black and Indigenous histories altogether. We must speak out against the
18 injustices we see being committed.

19 The Northern Illinois Conference has been a reconciling annual conference since 1986. We
20 remember that our call is to create a safe space for all people, especially those targeted for harm
21 or marginalized by society.

22 Our scriptures call us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to remember that all people are
23 created in the image of God. The Bible speaks extensively about justice and the importance of
24 treating all people equally (Micah 6:8). Jesus illustrated for us compassion for those who were
25 marginalized and oppressed (Matthew 9:36), and welcomed all kinds of people into his
26 ministry, including those who were considered outcasts by society (Luke 15:1-2).

27 Finally, if we believe in the unity of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:3), then we must speak out
28 when any part of the body is harmed. When trans people are harmed, demonized, and stripped
29 of their human and civil rights, the body of Christ itself is attacked, and thus we are all harmed.

¹ Ceron, Ella. “2023 Is Already a Record Year for Anti-LGBTQ Bills in the US.” *Bloomberg.Com*, 8
Mar. 2023. *www.bloomberg.com*, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-03-08/2023-is-already-a-record-year-for-anti-lgbtq-bills-in-the-us>.

1 **Document 700.07**

2 **Name: Encouraging Leadership with Integrity**

3 **Authors: NIC Church and Society, Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC MFSA Luis F. Reyes and Elisa**
4 **Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa Gatz, co-facilitators, NIC**
5 **General/Jurisdictional Delegation, Alka Lyall, chair**

6

7 Action:

8 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference expresses both respect and gratitude to those who
9 have voluntarily stepped away from positions of leadership as they journey away from
10 membership in The United Methodist Church.

11

12 As we continue this period of transition, the Northern Illinois Annual Conference calls upon
13 every United Methodist, as a disciple of Jesus the Christ, to move forward in fairness and with
14 integrity.

15

16 The NIC asks all lay and clergy members who intend to disaffiliate from The United Methodist
17 Church to recuse themselves from leadership roles in all areas of the church, including the local
18 church, district, conference, jurisdictional, and general church level committees, boards,
19 agencies, delegations, and episcopal leaders.

20

21 The NIC encourages the Conference Board of Trustees to develop codes of conduct to manage
22 conflicts of interest that may arise around discussions of disaffiliation agreements.

23

24 Rationale:

25 The vibrant future of The United Methodist Church requires deep commitment and loyal
26 leadership at every level. Grounded in a sense of duty and loyalty to the mission of the church,
27 leaders are counted on and expected to make decisions about the future of The United
28 Methodist Church with the absolute best interest of Christ's church at heart.

29

30 The selection, election, and appointment of clergy and lay leaders throughout The United
31 Methodist Church includes the implicit understanding that leaders will ethically serve in each
32 of their leadership roles with the utmost integrity. Leaders who do not intend to remain in The
33 United Methodist Church entangle themselves in a significant conflict of interest. The service of
34 a leader whose call to discipleship is aligned with The United Methodist Church is prevented
35 by the continued leadership of an individual who has made a private decision and/or public
36 declaration to leave The United Methodist Church. In November of 2022, and in historic
37 fashion, a resolution in support of leading with integrity was adopted at all five Jurisdictional
38 Conferences.

1 **Document 700.08**

2 **Name: Support of a Parole Pathway for Illinois**

3 **Authors:** Rachel Birkhahn-Rommelfanger; NIC Church and Society, Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC
4 MFSA, Luis F. Reyes and Elisa Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN, Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa
5 Gatz, co-facilitators; Rockford Urban Ministries, Violet Johnicker, Associate Director; John Bell;
6 Charles Straight; Lucas Pepper

7
8 **Action**

9 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference of the UMC:

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- condemns the lack of a parole system for all people in Illinois prisons, the absence of which is an outdated act of cruelty that has an unforgivably disparate impact on low-income people and families of color;
- supports Illinois HB3373 as an essential step forward to address this racist injustice by ensuring that every person who has served 20 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections would be eligible for a parole hearing and the possibility of earned re-entry;
- urges our Bishop to publicly support parole by speaking to the media, at public events, signing letters or petitions, authoring op-eds or editorials, and advocating in other ways for a just parole system in Illinois;
- implores our Bishop to speak out in support of passing Illinois HB3373 if it has not become law before June 2023 by sending to the Illinois General Assembly and Governor Pritzker a letter stating our Conference’s support for HB3373;
- encourages our Cabinet, Conference Leadership, and all congregations and clergy to publicly share the Conference’s support for a just parole system in Illinois;
- encourages our congregations to educate their members and the community about the need for a parole system for all people in Illinois prisons;
- encourages our congregations to join the efforts of advocates across our state to create a parole option for Illinois; and
- encourages our congregations to pray for all those imprisoned without the possibility of parole in Illinois and all those incarcerated in our state, nation, and world.

39 **Rationale**

40 Prior to 1978, every person in the Illinois Department of Corrections was reviewed for the
41 potential of release after serving a maximum of 11 years and 3 months. In 1978, at the beginning
42 of the “tough-on-crime” era and the war on drugs, Illinois eliminated its parole system,
43 meaning that our state no longer allows incarcerated people a periodic review of their capacity
44 to re-enter their community.

1 Over the last few decades, Illinois has increased sentences, multiplied them through Truth-In-
2 Sentencing, implemented three strikes laws, mandatory minimums, and sentencing
3 enhancements, and otherwise found ways to pile on more prison time for people in the system.

4 The prison system in Illinois directly and disproportionately targets people of color - Black
5 people in particular - and this is especially true for people serving longer sentences. While 14%
6 of Illinois' population is Black, 43% of people serving 5 years or less in Illinois prisons are Black.
7 Illinois' total prison population is 54% Black, but fully 63% of those serving extreme sentences
8 in our prisons - sentences longer than 20 years - are Black people.

9 Without a new parole system, there are 5,000 people in Illinois prisons today who will die
10 behind bars rather than ever receive consideration of their rehabilitation and readiness to re-
11 enter society. Over 80% of those 5,000 individuals are people of color.

12 Between Cook County's recognized position as the exoneration capital of the world, Illinois'
13 numerous documented accounts of systemic police torture of civilians, and our remarkable
14 history of violently expressed racial tensions between the police and gangs - including massive
15 dragnet operations which peaked well after 1978 - it is inexcusable that Illinois does not have an
16 established system for reviewing all incarcerated folks at some point during their incarceration.

17 As people of faith, we acknowledge the belovedness of each person, and that God's grace and
18 forgiveness is offered and available to all of us. No person, no matter what violation or harm
19 they may have caused, can be essentialized down to the worst thing they have ever done. Any
20 person can be redeemed. It is from our deep belief in the power and possibility of redemption
21 that we call for a system of parole to be established for all people in Illinois prisons.

22 HB 3373 was written by a group of 14 men who are all serving sentences of death by
23 incarceration in Illinois prisons right now. The bill says that, after any person has served 20
24 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections, they should be eligible for a parole hearing. This
25 bill will not release anybody from prison, but would provide a pathway to eligibility for parole.

26 At the inauguration of his ministry, Jesus quoted Isaiah and stated that he had come to set the
27 captives free (Luke 4:18). The call to free people from oppression comes clearly from the Old
28 and New Testament of our Holy Scripture. This bill is a chance to establish a pathway to release
29 the captives in our time.

1 **Document 700.09**

2 **Name: In Support of the Pretrial Fairness Act**

3 **Authors:** Rachel Birkhahn-Rommelfanger; NIC Church and Society, Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC
4 MFSA, Luis F. Reyes and Elisa Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN, Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa
5 Gatz, co-facilitators; Rockford Urban Ministries, Violet Johnicker, Associate Director; John Bell;
6 Charles Straight; Lucas Pepper

7
8 **Action**

9 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church:

- 10 ● supports the full implementation of the Pretrial Fairness Act (a part of IL Public Act 101-
11 0652, the SAFE-T Act) and supports the bill’s goal of ending money bond and reducing
12 pretrial jailing; and recognizes the leadership of our local congregations and clergy who
13 worked for passage of this historic legislation;
14
15 ● urges our Bishop to publicly support the full implementation of the Pretrial Fairness Act
16 in the media, at public events, sign letters or petitions, author op-eds or editorials, and
17 advocate in other ways;
18
19 ● urges our Cabinet, Conference Leadership, and all congregations and clergy to publicly
20 share the conference’s support with the media and generally speak out, sign letters or
21 petitions, author op-eds or editorials, and advocate in a variety of ways for the Pretrial
22 Fairness Act’s full implementation;
23
24 ● encourages our local congregations to educate their congregation members and the
25 community at large about money bond’s impact on the poor and people of color in our
26 state, Pretrial Fairness Act implementation, pretrial jailing, and criminal justice reform
27 through sermons, newsletters, social media, Bible study, education sessions, public
28 meetings, speaking to the press, and other outlets available to the congregation;
29
30 ● asks all of our members and community allies to write letters or speak to Judges,
31 Prosecutors, Public Defenders, and States Attorneys across Illinois to share our
32 conference support for the full implementation of the Pretrial Fairness Act; and
33
34 ● encourages members of our congregations and partner bodies to join in watching bond
35 court with the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice to help ensure the full implementation
36 of the Pretrial Fairness Act.
37

38 **Rationale**

39 Illinois is ending the unjust practice of money bond, a system that criminalizes poverty and
40 denies our constitutional right to be considered innocent until proven guilty. This is a huge step
41 toward decreasing mass incarceration and creating the beloved community God desires for
42 us. Illinois will be the first state in the country to end the use of money bond and will set a
43 precedent for the nation.
44

45 In January 2021, the Illinois legislature passed the Pretrial Fairness Act. This historic legislation
46 restores the presumption of innocence and makes Illinois safer by ending money bond and the

1 unconstitutional practice of caging people pretrial simply because they cannot afford to buy
2 their freedom.

3
4 There has been extreme, well-funded misinformation from opponents around the country; and
5 our church has an opportunity to voice our care for captives and the imprisoned by speaking
6 out on this issue.

7
8 Currently, the primary factor determining whether someone is free pretrial is the amount of
9 money in their wallet—not public safety. People are punished for being poor. A person accused
10 of a crime in Illinois can be held in jail under certain circumstances before their case has even
11 gone to trial (pretrial incarceration). When a judge determines there is any amount of money a
12 person could pay to get out (money bond) the judge has made the assessment that the person is
13 safe to return to the community, but some people don't have the money to buy their freedom.

14
15 Over a quarter of a million people are incarcerated in Illinois' jails every year. Most people
16 incarcerated in Illinois jails are presumed innocent and are still awaiting trial. In 2019, 89% of
17 people in Illinois jails were being held pretrial, demonstrating that people are held because they
18 cannot afford to pay to be released.

19
20 Money bonds disproportionately impact Black and Brown people. In the three largest county
21 jails in the state—Cook, Winnebago and Will—50% or more of those in jail are Black.¹ If we're
22 serious about ending racial injustice, we must do away with money bond.

23
24 The Pretrial Fairness Act takes money out of the picture and replaces it with a fair and robust
25 hearing process. By considering the specific circumstances of every case, the Pretrial Fairness
26 Act makes communities safer.

27
28 As Christians, numerous scripture passages call us to care for those imprisoned and
29 demonstrate God's action to free the captives, including Luke 4:14-21, Acts 5:17-20, Acts 16:25-
30 26, and Matthew 25:34-40.

31
32 Additionally, our Wesleyan heritage has a strong tradition of supporting those who are
33 oppressed and marginalized because of their poverty. John Wesley campaigned tirelessly for
34 improved conditions for prisoners. Once, in a period of nine months, he preached at least 67
35 times in various jails. Claiming this heritage, we affirm the rule of law, the guarantee of civil
36 liberties and rights, and equal access to justice for all people.

¹ "Individuals Held in Pretrial Detention and Under Pretrial Supervision in the Community." *Loyola University of Chicago Center for Criminal Justice*, 19 June 2022, <https://loyolaccj.org/pfa/blog/pfa-jail>.

1 **Document 700.10**

2 **Name: Supporting Creating a US Regional Conference**

3 **Authors: NIC Church and Society, Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC MFSA Luis F. Reyes and Elisa**
4 **Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN, Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa Gatz, co-facilitators, NIC**
5 **General/Jurisdictional Delegation, Alka Lyall, chair**

6

7 **Action:**

8 • The Northern Illinois Annual Conference supports the expressed intents of the
9 Christmas Covenant and Connectional Table (CT) legislation, including the
10 creation of Regional Conferences in Africa, Europe, the Philippines, and the U.S.,
11 respectively; and the NIC recognizes and supports the leadership of our Central
12 Conferences in the creation and furtherance of the Christmas Covenant as well the
13 Connectional Table’s future visioning on behalf of our worldwide fellowship.

14

15 • The NIC also urges the Council of Bishops to expedite the process of voting on the
16 constitutional amendments necessary to enact the regional conferences legislation,
17 calling special sessions of annual conferences where necessary. In line with the
18 intent of the non-disciplinary petition submitted by the Connectional Table, the
19 NIC requests the Council of Bishops to immediately appoint a 20-25-member
20 Interim Committee on Organization for a US Regional Conference to develop and
21 propose to the 2024 General Conference the structure and organization of a U.S.
22 Regional Conference.

23

24 In line with the CT’s legislation, this body would organize and plan for the
25 establishment and functioning of a new United States Regional Conference
26 comprising the five jurisdictions of the United States. Committee membership
27 should have a minimum of 3 members of each U.S. jurisdiction, 3 central
28 conference members and shall meet standards of racial and gender diversity. The
29 Committee should recommend a structure for the U.S. Regional Conference
30 including considerations such as its membership, committee structure, meeting
31 time, agency, and function.

32

33 • The Northern Illinois Annual Conference secretary shall send copies of this resolution to
34 all delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, including alternates, to the
35 Commission on the General Conference, and to the Council of Bishops.

36

37

38 **Rationale:**

39 The seven Central Conferences and five U.S. Jurisdictions of The United Methodist
40 Church engage in mission together in 136 countries; and the connectional ties between the
41 church in the United States and the Central Conferences are significant and vital to the
42 continued mission and ministry of the worldwide United Methodist Church. The existing
43 structure of The United Methodist Church at the general church level has historically
44 impeded each region from effectively tailoring its ministry to its specific contexts and
45 diminishes our ability to be a vital and effective church and needs to be re-envisioned to
46 achieve more fair and equitable church governance.

1 The Apostle Paul offered a beautiful example making clear the value of a church
2 established in diverse places with shared beliefs, alongside local and regional differences
3 in structure, worship, and style best suited to particular contexts. The creation of a U.S.
4 Regional Conference and the conversion of the Central Conferences to Regional
5 Conferences, as outlined in the [Christmas Covenant](#), developed by Central Conference
6 leaders in Africa and the Philippines, would establish structural parity throughout the
7 worldwide church and will establish the governance necessary to allow each region to
8 design ministry for its particular contexts, and thus more effectively make disciples of
9 Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

10
11 The NIC aspires to vital, thriving, multicultural, and diverse ministries that are open to all
12 people and can be a beacon of hope for the worldwide United Methodist Church. In
13 November of 2022, and in historic fashion, a resolution in support of a U.S. Regional
14 Conference was adopted at all five Jurisdictional Conferences.

1 **Document 700.11**

2 **Document Name: Supporting the Removal of Discriminatory Policies**

3 **Authors: NIC Church and Society, Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC MFSA Luis F. Reyes and Elisa**
4 **Gatz, co-chairs; NIC RMN Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa Gatz, co-facilitators, NIC**
5 **General/Jurisdictional Delegation, Alka Lyall, chair**

6

7 **Action:**

8 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference supports the removal of all discriminatory policies
9 and harmful language related to sexual orientation, and urges delegates to adopt the following
10 petitions; petitions already submitted and that will be before the voting body of the next
11 General Conference. Links to documents/petitions can be found in the following rationale.

12

13 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference secretary shall send copies of this resolution to: all
14 General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates and alternates, the Commission on General
15 Conference; and the Council of Bishops.

16

17 **Petition No: 20730-CB-¶161-G;**

18 Entitled: Revised Social Principles-161 and 162

19 Summary: Removes the statement that affirms marriage as only between “one man and one
20 woman.” Removes the statement that only affirms “heterosexual” marriage. Removes, “The
21 UMC does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible
22 with Christian teaching.”

23

24 **Petition No: 20177-FO-¶304.3**

25 Entitled: A Simple Plan #3

26 Summary: Removes ¶304.3 which states, “self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be
27 certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist
28 Church.” Also removes the corresponding footnote stating that “self-avowed practicing
29 homosexual is understood to mean that a person openly acknowledges to a bishop, district
30 superintendent, district committee of ordained ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry, or clergy
31 session that the person is a practicing homosexual; or is living in a same-sex marriage, domestic
32 partnership or civil union, or is a person who publicly states she or he is a practicing
33 homosexual.”

34

35 **Petition No: 20469-OM-¶341.6**

36 Entitled: A Simple Plan #5

37 Summary: Removes ¶341.6, which states (under unauthorized conduct), “ceremonies that
38 celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be
39 conducted in our churches.”

40

41 **Petition No: 20181-FA-¶613-G**

42 Entitled: A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 6 of 8

43 Summary: Removes ¶613.19, which prohibits annual conferences from giving “United
44 Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group, or otherwise use such funds to promote the
45 acceptance of homosexuality. “

46

1
2 **Petition No: 20190-FA-¶806-G**
3 Entitled: A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 7 of 8
4 Summary: Removes ¶806.9, which tasks GCFA with “ensuring that no board, agency,
5 committee, commission, or council gives United Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group.”
6

7 **Petition No: 20304-HS-¶415.6-G**
8 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #11 – Amend Episcopal Responsibilities
9 Summary: Removes statements prohibiting bishops from commissioning, ordaining, or
10 consecrating persons determined to be “self-avowed practicing homosexuals.”
11

12 **Petition No: 20387-JA-¶2711.3-G**
13 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #22 – Penalties
14 Summary: Removes predetermined, mandatory minimum penalties for clergy who officiate
15 same sex weddings.
16

17 **Petition Number: 20365-JA-¶2702.1-G**
18 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #21 - Chargeable Offenses
19 Summary: Removes chargeable offenses that target “self-avowed practicing homosexuals” and
20 clergy who conduct same-sex weddings.
21

22 **Petition No: 20420-OM-¶310.2d-G**
23 Entitled: A Simple Plan #4
24 Summary: Removes statements from Footnote 3 that repeat phrases being removed from other
25 paragraphs in the BOD.
26

27 **Rationale:**
28 A more diverse and fully welcoming UMC is a testament to a more complete image of God,
29 which includes persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities, and
30 a more diverse and fully welcoming UMC allows all United Methodists to offer their prayers,
31 presence, gifts, service and witness, as followers of Jesus, to further Christ’s mission. By the
32 power of the Holy Spirit, God calls and includes all persons into the life and leadership of the
33 Church, transcending the limitations of human categorization. The current language in the Book
34 of Discipline places limits on Christ’s teaching and example of God’s universal love, and the
35 current language in the Book of Discipline falls short of embodying the spirit of John Wesley’s
36 simple rules to do no harm, do all the good we can, and love God. Legislative changes to the
37 Book of Discipline would reduce barriers and allow movement toward wider diversity and
38 inclusion in our United Methodist Church.
39

40 **Petition No: 20730-CB-¶161-G;**
41 Entitled: Revised Social Principles-161 and 162
42 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 208](#)
43

44 **Petition No: 20177-FO-¶304.3**
45 Entitled: A Simple Plan #3
46 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 624](#)
47

1 **Petition No: 20469-OM-¶341.6**
2 Entitled: A Simple Plan #5
3 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 1041](#)
4
5 **Petition No: 20181-FA-¶613-G**
6 Entitled: A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 6 of 8
7 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 504](#)
8
9 **Petition No: 20190-FA-¶806-G**
10 Entitled: A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 7 of 8
11 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 508](#)
12
13 **Petition No: 20304-HS-¶415.6-G**
14 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #11 – Amend Episcopal Responsibilities
15 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 977](#)
16
17 **Petition No: 20387-JA-¶2711.3-G**
18 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #22 – Penalties
19 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 933](#)
20
21 **Petition Number: 20365-JA-¶2702.1-G**
22 Entitled: Next Generation UMC #21 - Chargeable Offenses
23 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 924](#)
24
25 **Petition No: 20420-OM-¶310.2d-G**
26 Entitled: A Simple Plan #4
27 [ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 1022](#)

1 **Document 700.12**

2 **NAME: Standing with our Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers Communities**

3 **AUTHORS: Northern Illinois Church and Society, Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC RMN, Alka Lyall,**
4 **Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa Gatz, co-facilitators; and NIC Methodist Federation for Social**
5 **Action, Luis F. Reyes and Elisa Gatz, co-chairs.**

6
7 **ACTION:**

8 The NIC reaffirms its commitment to support the rights of immigrants, refugees, and asylum
9 seekers to legal services, health, housing, education, and other necessary services to become full
10 members of our communities.

11
12 We urge clergy, lay leaders, and members to continue to:

- 13 ● Support Immigration Law and Justice Network (formerly national JFON) and other
14 advocacy and support groups such as Interfaith Immigration Coalition, Illinois Coalition
15 for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, and Chicago LGBT Asylum Support Program
16 (CLASP).
- 17 ● Join JFON and other advocacy groups in taking legislative action at the State level to
18 urge our elected officials to take bolder actions to increase the funds available for legal
19 resources; make drivers' licenses available on an equal basis; require medical financial
20 information be made available; and take other actions to benefit not only migrants but
21 other low-income communities.
- 22 ● Continue to call upon the Biden administration to end the new restrictions, such as the
23 Transit ban, and instead to work on ways to make pathways to citizenship easier and
24 not more restrictive.

25
26 **RATIONALE:**

27 NIC has supported the JFON network and other organizations to provide services to our
28 community here in Illinois. See, www.nijfon.org. But we know those resources have been
29 stretched to the limits in the past year, and as people of faith we are a critical ally to their work
30 providing direct services and advocacy work.

31
32 Since August 30, 2022, nearly 3,700 migrants have been bused to Chicago; 425 are school-aged
33 children. (These numbers have only increased since November 2022). One bilingual
34 coordinator said "We're talking about an unfolding humanitarian crisis of children and families
35 who arrive with no shoes." The City and County have increased resources, and still need the
36 support of community and faith-based organizations.

37 [https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/supp_info/office-of-new-](https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/supp_info/office-of-new-americans/resource-flyers-for-new-americans.html)
38 [americans/resource-flyers-for-new-americans.html](https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/supp_info/office-of-new-americans/resource-flyers-for-new-americans.html)

39
40 On the Federal level, the Biden administration now has introduced new measures, including the
41 Transit ban, which will negatively impact the most vulnerable migrants. NIC can do more to
42 support the advocacy and humanitarian work of JFON, Interfaith Immigration Coalition, and
43 comparable organizations. It is critical to come together to ensure that resources are provided
44 for our immigrant communities and at the same time that resources not be taken away from
45 other marginalized communities, especially poor communities of color.

1 Jesus said "I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Matthew 25:35B; and "do not neglect to
2 show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing
3 it." Hebrews 13:2; "When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the
4 alien." Leviticus 19:33.

1 **Document 700.13**

2 **Name: A RESOLUTION IN RESPONSE TO THE OVERTURNING OF ROE VS. WADE**
3 **AUTHORS: NIC RMN, Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa Gatz, co-facilitators; and NIC**
4 **Methodist Federation for Social Action, Luis F. Reyes and Elisa Gatz, co-chairs.**

5
6 **Action:**

7 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church expresses outrage
8 with the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade and the adverse impacts this
9 decision will have on women, children, and youth throughout the United States.

10 The NIC calls on its congregations to have well-facilitated conversations about abortion care,
11 prioritizing compassion over judgement.

12 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference secretary will send a copy of this resolution to each
13 member of the federal Congressional delegations that represent our annual conference region.

14 **Rationale:**

15 The United Methodist Social Principles (paragraph 161 K) state that "we are equally bound to
16 respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother and the unborn child," and that
17 "we recognize the tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases, we
18 support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures by certified medical
19 providers." The United Methodist Social Principles (paragraph 161 K) further state "the Church
20 shall encourage ministries to reduce unintended pregnancies such as comprehensive, age-
21 appropriate sexuality education, advocacy in regard to contraception, and support of initiatives
22 that enhance the quality of life for all women and girls around the globe," and "a decision
23 concerning abortion should be made only after thoughtful and prayerful consideration by the
24 parties involved, with medical, family, pastoral, and other appropriate counsel."

25 On June 24, 2022, the Supreme Court of the United States overturned Roe v. Wade which for
26 fifty years has given pregnant people in the United States the right and power over their own
27 bodies to choose, in consultation with their medical professionals, the best way forward when
28 facing difficult decisions regarding pregnancy.

29 It is a statistical certainty that people in our churches have themselves made the decision to
30 have an abortion or know people who have had abortions. Reduced access to reproductive care
31 disproportionately harms poor people and communities of color. In 1967, 21 clergy, including 6
32 Methodist clergy, published their names in the *New York Times* offering to help women find safe
33 abortions care at a time when abortions were illegal in much of the country, one of the first acts
34 of the Clergy Consultation Service, which eventually became a nationwide network of more
35 than 1000 clergy helping to save the lives of countless American women.

1 **Document: 700.14**
2 **Name: Disaffiliation of Local Churches**
3 **Authors: Conference Board of Trustees**
4

5 **Financial Implications:** As an average over the last 5 years these local churches paid \$108,661 on
6 apportionments of \$157,510 and left unpaid invoices of \$32,587. Disaffiliation of these 10 churches
7 will not affect the apportionments assigned to other local churches in the NIC.

8 **Action (not amendable):**

9 As a connectional community of faith, the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist
10 Church values our diversity. We enter this season of disaffiliation in prayer, with discernment,
11 recognizing that, for some, the theological differences are so great as to require separation. It is our
12 pledge to do this work with respect and grounding in our faith as we bless those who must set out
13 on a new path all to the glory of God. May our words and deeds be healing.

14 Pursuant to Book of Discipline paragraph 2553, the Northern Illinois Annual Conference of The
15 United Methodist Church ratifies, approves, and authorizes the performance of the Northern Illinois
16 Conference in Disaffiliation Agreements with these local churches should the local church satisfy all
17 requirements in the Disaffiliation Agreement. The Disaffiliation Date for all churches is June 30,
18 2023. The following churches have secured 2/3 approval of a motion to disaffiliate from The United
19 Methodist Church at a duly called Church Conference:

20 Calvary UMC (Stockton)	McConnell UMC (McConnell)
21	
22 Faith Evangelical (Elmhurst)	Naperville Korean (Naperville)
23 Fenton UMC (Fenton)	Plano UMC (Plano)
24 First Korean UMC (Wheeling)	Van Brocklin-Florence UMC (Freeport)
25 La Luz UMC (Elgin)	Willow UMC (Willow)

26 The conditions and terms of the Disaffiliation Agreement with each church specifies fees to be paid,
27 requirements of incorporation of a receiving church entity, satisfaction of any lending from or
28 guarantees by the annual conference, suspension of the use of UMC intellectual property and UMC
29 tax exemptions, and a release from claims/indemnification of the Conference.

30 **Rationale:**

- 31 1. The historic polity of The United Methodist Church and predecessor denominations has
32 included the trust clause, enumerated in Discipline paragraph 2501 as “all properties of
33 United Methodist local churches...are held, in trust, for the benefit of the entire
34 denomination and usage of church property is subject to the Discipline.”
- 35 2. Paragraph 2529.1.b (3) of the Discipline provides that a local church cannot sever its
36 connectional relationship to The United Methodist Church without the consent of the annual
37 conference after the local church meets certain conditions.
- 38 3. Passed in 2019, Book of Discipline ¶ 2553 allows for disaffiliation of local churches and the
39 release of any church property from the trust imposed by the Discipline under specific
40 circumstances. The terms and conditions for a local church’s disaffiliation from The United

1 Methodist Church are to be, “established by the board of trustees of the applicable annual
2 conference,” and, “memorialized in a binding Disaffiliation Agreement between the annual
3 conference and the trustees of the local church acting on behalf of their members.”

- 4 4. These local churches participated in a discernment process led by conference leadership
5 where the local church’s history with the connection was presented. Followed by an officially
6 called church conference at which at least two-thirds (2/3) of the professing local church
7 members present voted to request disaffiliation from The United Methodist Church “for
8 reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions of the Book of
9 Discipline related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-
10 avowed practicing homosexuals as resolved and adopted by the 2019 General Conference or
11 the actions or inactions of its annual conference related to these issues which follow.”
- 12 5. Each of these local churches has signed a disaffiliation agreement with the Board of Trustees
13 of the Northern Illinois Conference. The Disaffiliation Agreement provides that, subject to
14 annual conference approval and the performance and satisfaction by the church of all the
15 terms and conditions in the Disaffiliation Agreement, the disaffiliation of the local church
16 from The United Methodist Church will be effective on June 30, 2023 (the “Disaffiliation
17 Date”) and that the Northern Illinois Conference will release all trust interests in real and
18 personal property held in title of the local church. The Disaffiliation Agreement itemizes
19 required actions, including payment amounts, incorporating as a legal new church entity,
20 indemnifying and holding harmless the conference, satisfying all liabilities to the conference
21 including clergy benefit liabilities and mortgage loans issued or guaranteed, surrendering of
22 UMC intellectual property, and remitting all outstanding invoices for every conference
23 program such as clergy benefits or property insurance through the date of disaffiliation.
- 24 6. As a condition of disaffiliation these churches will make a final payment to the Northern
25 Illinois Annual Conference. The 10 local churches will complete the 2023 apportionment for
26 \$118,112.50 and remit an additional year of apportionment for \$129,534.00. \$1,547,622 shall
27 be added to the Conference Board of Pensions reserve fund to release these churches from
28 obligations for future clergy benefit payments. In addition, the churches must remain current
29 on all 2023 invoices, while remitting \$186,917 for non-payment of prior benefit and property
30 insurance invoices. The Conference had made grants in support of some of these local
31 ministries in the past three years and, upon disaffiliation, \$49,150 will be returned. \$10,000
32 will be contributed to the Boy Scout Survivor Fund as a condition of disaffiliation. Finally,
33 \$2,448,490 is collected for the connection so that we can continue our mission in the absence
34 of these congregations. Two churches must refinance existing debt for full satisfaction of a
35 loan guaranteed by the Conference and of a Red Door Loan issued by the Conference prior
36 to disaffiliation.
- 37 7. The 10 properties being transferred to disaffiliating churches have believed market values of
38 over \$10,000,000. Four of these properties do not have potable water, two are within 3 miles
39 of another United Methodist Church, and two have been places of significant investment by
40 the conference for new church development as new churches within the past 15 years.

1 Document 702.01a
2 Document Name: Standing Rules Update re: Legislative Sections
3 Authors: P Joanne Ray, Chair of Daily Procedure, Arlene Christopherson, Assistant to the
4 Bishop

5
6 **Action:**
7 The Northern Illinois Annual Conference formally adopts the following standing rules changes
8 to reflect the inclusion of Legislative Sections which were re-introduced in 2022.
9

10
11 **5. Consent Procedure, Legislative Sections & Legislative Procedure**
12

13 **a. Consent Procedure**

- 14 1. All categories, including benevolence, administrative, clergy support, General
15 Conference petitions and other legislation submitted to the annual conference are
16 eligible for the consent calendar except the coordinated budget, Historical Reports, and
17 any declaratory decisions (pursuant to JCD 1080).
- 18 2. The goal of legislative sections is to create a consent calendar. The consent calendar will
19 be presented and acted upon after the legislative sections have met and had the
20 opportunity to add ~~more~~ items to the consent calendar as announced in the agenda.
- 21 3. Late legislation is not eligible for the preliminary consent calendar.
- 22 4. After a legislative section acts on any legislative item, if it receives 80% of the votes in
23 favor as perfected, it shall be placed on the consent calendar with a recommendation for
24 approval. Any legislative item receiving 80% of the votes against will also be placed on
25 the consent calendar with a recommendation for disapproval. The consent calendar shall
26 be distributed at least two hours before its consideration as announced or on the agenda.
- 27 4.5. Items from the consent calendar may be removed by a petition signed by 25 members of
28 the annual conference and submitted to the Chair of Daily Procedure by the deadline
29 given in the agenda (within 2 hours of the presentation of the consent calendar).
30 Petition forms will be made available on the NIC website or hard copies may be
31 obtained from the Chair of Daily Procedure. Items removed from the consent calendar
32 will be addressed after priority legislation, if time permits.
- 33 5.6. The consent calendar is presented to the members by the Chair of Daily Procedure. This
34 presentation shall be made at least 2 hours prior to a vote being taken. The consent
35 calendar shall be passed by a majority vote.

36 **b. Legislative Sections**

- 37 1. Legislative sections will be determined in number and size by the Annual Conference
38 Committee, Sections will be composed of no fewer than 50 or more than 250 persons.
- 39 2. Members of the legislative sections shall be randomly assigned by the Committee on
40 Credentials from among the members of the Annual Conference with equal numbers of
41 clergy and laity assigned to each section.
- 42 3. The Chair of Daily Procedure shall receive, assign document numbers to, and make
43 assignment to Sections of all documents of programs, administration, policies, General
44 or Jurisdictional Conference petitions, requests for Judicial Council decision and
45 declarations, and resolutions.

- 1 4. The following legislative sections will be given legislation appropriate to their sections
2 (with any legislation added at the discretion of the Annual Conference Committee when
3 needed to even out the legislative workload):
 - 4 a. **Church and Society** – This legislative section shall address ~~all~~ matters relating to
5 legislation concerning the Conference Board of Church and Society, Conference
6 Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns, Conference
7 Commission of Religion and Race, Conference Commission on the Status and Role of
8 Women, advocacy, the Social Principles, Justice and Peace issues, and related topics.
 - 9 b. **Discipleship** – This legislative section shall address ~~all~~ matters relating to nurture,
10 outreach, witness, United Methodist Women, United Methodist Youth, Conference
11 Board of Laity, United Methodist Men, congregational development and
12 redevelopment, children’s ministries, and related topics.
 - 13 c. **Global Ministries** – This legislative section shall address ~~all~~ matters relating to the
14 Conference Board of Global Ministries, sister relationships with other annual
15 conferences and autonomous Methodist/Wesleyan bodies and traditions, Advance
16 Specials, Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries, and related
17 topics.
 - 18 d. **Administration** – This legislative section shall address ~~all~~ matters relating to the
19 Conference Board of Trustees, Conference Council on Finance and Administration,
20 Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits, Conference Commission on
21 Equitable Salaries, matters of administrative and personnel policy, Archives and
22 History and related topics.
 - 23 e. **Order** – This legislative section shall address ~~all~~ matters relating to the Conference
24 Board of Ordained Ministry, Standing Rules, Episcopacy, Jurisdictional
25 relationships, and related topics.

26 **c. Legislative Procedure**

- 27 1. Legislative items will be addressed in only one section.
- 28 2. The Chair of Daily Procedure, in consultation with the Annual Conference Committee
29 and cabinet, shall invite and appoint persons to serve as the chair, vice-chair,
30 parliamentarian and secretary/scribe of ~~a each~~ legislative section giving attention to
31 diversity. No person shall be appointed to a section that is addressing resolution(s) for
32 which they are author/co-author. The Chair of Daily Procedure shall provide training to
33 the persons appointed for legislative section leadership as to parliamentary procedure,
34 reporting, and recording the action of the legislative section in conjunction with the
35 conference secretary, parliamentarian, and other appropriate person(s) or body(ies).
- 36 3. The Section chair, vice chair or secretary will report to the Chair of Daily Procedure the
37 action of the Section on each item(s) assigned to it, giving such minutes and information
38 as will enable the chair to schedule the reports and keep the presiding Bishop informed
39 of matters to be presented.
- 40 4. Only those persons assigned to a legislative section shall have voice and vote within the
41 legislative section.
 - 42 a. When legislation is submitted before annual conference, it needs to ~~include who~~
43 will be a designate one resource person who, if requested by the section chair,
44 will speak to the legislation for the legislative section if one is desired. Resource
45 persons are those persons designated by an author(s) of legislation for the
46 purpose of answering questions during legislative sections, providing

1 background information, or other information which the author(s) believe will be
2 helpful for the section discussion.

3 b. The Chair of Daily Procedure will provide the legislative section chair(s) a list of
4 those persons who are requested as resource persons for each document.

5 c. If a resource person is a member of the legislative section, the resource person
6 may speak only as a resource person during the discussion on that piece of
7 legislation but has the right to vote. A resource person who is not a member of
8 the legislative section may speak as invited but cannot vote, and as a resource
9 person and not the author of the legislation, a non-member resource person
10 cannot have the last speech.

11 5. The Chair of Daily Procedure shall provide the section leadership the appropriate forms
12 for reporting the action of the legislative section.

13 6. The Section shall register the number of votes for ~~7~~ and against ~~and abstaining~~ on all
14 legislation as finally perfected and report such votes to the Chair of Daily Procedure.
15 There is no vote take for abstentions. A motion to table should be seen as a "no" vote. If
16 the section concurs, the report will be non-concurrence and the resolution would not be
17 placed on the consent calendar.

18 6.7. Amendments must speak to the main motion and cannot reverse the intent of the maker
19 of the motion. If the legislative sections make any changes (amendments) to documents,
20 such changes will be distributed to all members.

21 7.8. Section reports shall be made in a printed format. Legislative Section leadership may
22 report the action of the legislative section if the Chair of Daily Procedure believes a
23 report from the leadership will help clarify the printed and distributed report.

24 8.9. If necessary and possible, changes in a document made by a legislative section shall be
25 ~~printed and~~ distributed before this legislation is brought before the Conference (unless
26 they can be easily seen and understood verbally or on a PowerPoint).

27 10. Resolutions adopted by the Conference that are timely and have not been rescinded or
28 superseded may be resubmitted in the 701 series and will be published for a period of
29 five years following their adoption. The original submitting agency/individual has the
30 primary responsibility of indicating in the resolution their desire that the resolution
31 remain in effect or request that designation at the following Conference. The
32 resubmitted material would consist of the title, the year first adopted, and the text of the
33 original "action" section.

34
35 **d. Legislative Effective Date:** All legislation shall become effective upon the close of the session
36 at which it is passed unless a different starting date is specified at the time of passage.

37
38
39
40 **Rationale:**

41
42 When legislation was passed in 2021 to reinstitute legislative sections, the standing rule process
43 for lifting from the consent calendar was deleted by that legislation and no new process was
44 submitted in its place.

45
46 In 2022, we followed recent practice for lifting resolutions from the consent calendar (for
47 independent discussion/voting) – requiring petitions with 25 signatures.

1
2
3

This update will reflect our practice for 2023 and future annual conferences of the Northern Illinois Conference.

1 **Document 700.15**

2 **Document Name: Identifying and Opposing Apartheid in the Holy Land**

3 **Authors: United Methodists for Kairos Response, Paula Roderick; NIC Church and**
4 **Society, Elisa Gatz, chair; NIC MFSA Luis F. Reyes and Elisa Gatz, co-chairs; NIC**
5 **RMN Alka Lyall, Luis F. Reyes, and Elisa Gatz, co-facilitators**

6 **Action:**

7 The Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church affirms that
8 apartheid is antithetical to the Gospel message. We recognize and oppose Israeli
9 apartheid as we strive to "resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they
10 present themselves," and
11

12 The Conference calls on the U.S. government to condition military funding to Israel
13 upon Israel's willingness to dismantle its apartheid system and implement all the rights
14 due to Palestinians under international law, and
15

16 The Conference urges all United Methodist clergy and laity to listen to the voices of
17 Palestinians regarding their situation, meet with them in their homeland, seek
18 opportunities to hear from them at online events. We urge UM clergy and laity to study
19 the Palestinian Christians' landmark 2020 document entitled "Cry for Hope: A Call for
20 Decisive Action," and to educate themselves on apartheid by studying the landmark
21 human rights reports, such as from Amnesty International. Links to these documents
22 may be found in the following rationale.
23

24 **Rationale:**

25 Israel is the sole governing power in most of Israel and the occupied territories. Israel
26 maintains primary control over most Palestinians' lives. Israeli authorities have
27 maintained domination over Palestinians by enacting a system of laws and policies that
28 grant full self-determination exclusively to Jewish Israelis and systematically oppresses
29 Palestinians. This is the essence of apartheid.
30

31 Apartheid is a "crime against humanity" under international law.¹ The primary
32 features of apartheid include:

¹ See, International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (adopted 1973; entered 1976) https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.10_International%20Convention%20on%20the%20Suppression%20and%20Punishment%20of%20the%20Crime%20of%20Apartheid.pdf

- 1 • codifying into law a preferred group of people, giving that group preferential
- 2 access to resources, benefits and services,
- 3 • segregating the population into geographic areas based on identity, and
- 4 • establishing laws and policies designed to suppress opposition to the regime and
- 5 enforcing domination through arbitrary imprisonment, torture, cruel and inhumane
- 6 treatment, and other violations of human rights.

7

8 Israel has seized more than three-quarters of the land of its Palestinian citizens and
9 continues until today; Palestinians in the OPT have lived under Israeli military law for
10 generations without any protected civil rights.

11 If apartheid is to be opposed and abolished, it is essential for the international
12 community to recognize and name apartheid where it exists. The Social Principles of
13 The United Methodist Church state that United Methodists “commend and encourage
14 the self-awareness of all racial and ethnic groups and oppressed people that leads them
15 to demand their just and equal rights as members of society,” and furthermore “call the
16 Church to challenge any hierarchy of cultures or identities.”

17

18 Links to the documents listed in the resolution are provided in the footnotes below.
19 “Cry for Hope: A Call for Decisive Action”²

20 Landmark human rights reports, such as from Amnesty International.³

² A Cry for Hope, <https://www.cryforhope.org/>

³ See, Al Haq, Israeli Apartheid: Tool of Zionist Settler Colonialism, Nov. 29, 2022, <https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/20931.html>; Amnesty International: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2022/02/israels-system-of-apartheid/> (February 2022); B’tselem, *This is Apartheid*, https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101_this_is_apartheid, Jan. 12, 2021; Global Kairos and Kairos Palestine <https://www.kairopalestine.ps/images/kp-a-dossier-on-israeli-apartheid-main.pdf>; Human Rights Watch, *A Threshold Crossed*, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/04/27/threshold-crossed/israeli-authorities-and-crimes-apartheid-and-persecution> (April 2021).