

IX. PETITIONS TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

NOTES:

The petitions to the 2008 session are printed here in the form in which they were approved or referred by the conference, which is not in every case identical to the form in which they were originally submitted. In the interest of clarity and economy, the texts of petitions which were not adopted or referred by the conference are not printed.

Whenever the text of a petition is printed elsewhere in the journal, as in the case of proposals from the agencies of the conference, the reader will be referred to the appropriate section.

PETITION 1 **Subject:** 2009 Conference Funds and Financial Policies

Submitted by: Council on Finance and Administration

Text: See Proposals 1-22 in the report of the Council on Finance and Administration (Sec. VIII.A, pp. 225-234).

Conference Action: Adopted petition with amendments

PETITION 2 **Subject:** Advance Specials for 2008-2009

Submitted by: Commission on Outreach Ministries

Text: See the proposal on this subject in the report of the Commission on Outreach Ministries (Sec. VIII.B.2.b, pp. 240-241).

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 3 **Subject:** Golden Cross

Submitted by: Commission on Outreach Ministries

Text: See the proposal on this subject in the report of the Commission on Outreach Ministries (Sec. VIII.B.2, p. 242).

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 4 **Subject:** Directors of Wesley Community Development Corporation

Submitted by: Board of Directors, Wesley Community Development Corporation

Text: See the nominations of directors of the Wesley Community Development Corporation in the report of the Commission on Outreach Ministries (Sec. VIII.B.2.b, p. 245).

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 5 **Subject:** Brevard College Trustees

Submitted by: Board of Trustees, Brevard College

Text: See the nominations of Brevard College trustees in the report of the Council on Higher Education (Sec. VIII.D, p. 256).

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 6 **Subject:** High Point University

Submitted by: Board of Trustees, High Point University

Text: See the nominations of High Point University trustees in the report of the Council on Higher Education (Sec. VIII.D, p. 256).

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 7 **Subject:** Campus Ministry Boards

Submitted by: Council on Higher Education Ministries

Text: See the nominations of campus ministry boards in the report of the Council on Campus Ministry (Sec. VIII.E, pp. 256-257).

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 8 **Subject:** Aldersgate Boards

Submitted by: Board of Advisors, Aldersgate United Methodist Retirement Community

Text: See Proposals 1-3 in the report of Aldersgate United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc. (Sec. VIII. F.1, p. 258).

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 9 **Subject:** Arbor Acres Directors

Submitted by: Board of Directors, Arbor Acres United Methodist Retirement Community

Text: See the single proposal in the report of Arbor Acres United Methodist Retirement Community, Inc. (Sec. VIII.F.2, p. 259).

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 10 **Subject:** Children's Home Trustees

Submitted by: Board of Trustees, The Children's Home, Inc.

Text: See the single proposal in the report of The Children's Home, Inc. (Sec. VIII.F.3, p. 260).

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 11 Subject: Givens Estates Directors**Submitted by:** Board of Directors, Givens Estates United Methodist Retirement Community**Text:** See the single proposal in the report of Givens Estates United Methodist Retirement Community (Sec. VIII.F.4, pp. 260-261).**Conference Action:** Adopted petition**PETITION 12 Subject:** UMAR Trustees**Submitted by:** Board of Trustees, UMAR-WNC, Inc.**Text:** See the single proposal in the report of UMAR, Inc. (Sec. VIII.F.5, p. 261-262).**Conference Action:** Adopted petition**PETITION 13 Subject:** MCCS Directors**Submitted by:** Board of Directors, Methodist Counseling and Consultation Services (MCCS)**Text:** See the proposal on this subject in the report of Methodist Counseling and Consultation Services (MCCS) (Sec. VIII.F.7, p. 263).**Conference Action:** Adopted petition**PETITION 14 Subject:** Amendments to Board of Ordained Ministry Policies**Submitted by:** Board of Ordained Ministry**Text:** See the single proposal in the report of the Board of Ordained Ministry (Sec. VIII.K), pp. 266-268).**Conference Action:** Adopted petition**PETITION 15 Subject:** Pension Programs and Policies**Submitted by:** Board of Pension and Health Benefits**Text:** See Proposals 1-3 in the report of the Board of Pension and Health Benefits (Sec. VIII.L, pp. 270-271).**Conference Action:** Adopted petition**PETITION 16 Subject:** Health Benefits Program and Policies**Submitted by:** Health Benefits Committee, Board of Pension and Health Benefits**Text:** See Proposals 1-12 in the report of the Health Benefits Committee of the Board of Pension and Health Benefits (Sec. VIII.L, p. 275).**Conference Action:** Adopted petition**PETITION 17 Subject:** The Annual Conference Meeting**Submitted by:** Committee on the Annual Conference Meeting**Text:** See Proposals 1-7 in the report of the Committee on the Annual Conference Meeting (Sec. VIII.N, p. 278).**Conference Action:** Adopted petition**PETITION 18 Subject:** Equitable Compensation Policies and Guidelines**Submitted by:** Commission on Equitable Compensation**Text:** See the entire report of the Commission on Equitable Compensation (Sec. VIII.V, pp. 282-283).**Conference Action:** Adopted petition**PETITION 19 Subject:** Cole Foundation Trustee**Submitted by:** Board of Trustees, The Eugene M. Cole Foundation**Text:** See the single proposal in the report of the Trustees of the Eugene M. Cole Foundation (Sec. VIII.CC, p. 292).**Conference Action:** Adopted petition**PETITION 20 Subject:** Articles of Religion in the Local Church**Submitted by:** David P. Calhoun, Pastor, Wilkesboro Church, Wilkesboro**Text:** Whereas, Many United Methodists are unaware of the origins of the doctrines of our church; therefore, be it *Resolved*, That during the month of August each year, the churches of The Western North Carolina Annual Conference be encouraged to make copies of the Articles of Religion (*Discipline* ¶ 103) available to the congregation, and each pastor be encouraged to include the Articles of Religion in his/her preaching and teaching.**Conference Action:** Adopted petition**PETITION 21 Subject:** (Rural Life Sunday)**Submitted by:** Randy L. Wall, Chairperson, WNCC United Methodist Rural Fellowship**Text:** Whereas, Paragraph 266.3 of *The Book of Discipline* (2004) states that:

Rural Life Sunday shall be observed on a date to be determined by the annual conference. Rural Life Sunday shall call the Church to celebrate the rural heritage of The United Methodist Church, to recognize the ongoing crisis occurring in rural areas of the nation and world today, and to affirm the interdependence of rural and urban communities. The observance of Rural Life Sunday shall be under the general supervision of the General Board of Global Ministries. Anyone who desires to recommend a Rural Life Sunday theme for a given year for this Sunday may do so one year prior to the observance for which the recommendation is made. Recommendations are to be made to the General Board of Global Ministries, and the voting members of the board shall determine the annual theme of this Sunday;

and

Whereas, The rural crisis has led many rural residents of our country to suffer the loss of self-esteem and their way of life, due to the closure of farms, businesses, schools, and health-care facilities; and

Whereas, The state of North Carolina continues to suffer the loss of rural and open land; and

Whereas, The good citizens of North Carolina in rural and urban areas face growing environmental concerns about the quality of our land, water, and air, due to what is commonly called "urban sprawl"; and

Whereas, Rural Life Sunday has traditionally promoted themes related to health and wholeness, conservation, and

stewardship of our natural resources; and

Whereas, These themes are of increasing importance; and

Whereas, *The Book of Discipline* gives authority to the annual conference to set Rural Life Sunday on the date best for the annual conference; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church designate the sixth Sunday after Easter, or another Sunday where needed, as Rural Life Sunday in 2009; urge the clergy and laity of its member congregations to observe this day; and encourage its member congregations to utilize resources for this observance from such sources as the General Board of Global Ministries, the United Methodist Rural Fellowship, the Rural Chaplains Association, and county soil and water conservation offices located across the region.

Resolved, That in the coming quadrennium, there be a celebration of town and country at annual conference, patterned after the celebration that took place at the 2008 General Conference.

Conference Action: Adopted petition with one amendment

PETITION 22 Subject: Study of Annual Conference Meeting

Submitted by: Claudia G. Harrelson, Pastor, Stokesdale Church, Northeast District

Text: *Resolved*, That a task force, appointed by the bishop, be constituted to evaluate what takes place during the actual sessions of the annual meeting of the Western North Carolina Conference (e.g., reports from various agencies, time spent on legislation, special recognitions, etc.). Attention shall be given to concerns about lack of clergy attendance at sessions, the number of reports given, and the need for additional time for conversation, which is now referred to in many arenas as "holy conferencing," in order to allow those present to discuss and discern the critical issues of the annual conference.

Rationale:

The Western North Carolina Annual Conference spends the majority of its annual meeting time in the giving of reports and dealing with items required by the *Discipline*. There is very little time given to what is often described as "holy conferencing." It is also a statement of the obvious that there are usually more clergy outside of the auditorium than inside. For many clergy, this is the only time they have with friends, both lay and clergy, to really talk to each other. As we are beginning a new quadrennium, and there will be, prior to the 2009 annual conference, a number of changes, including our bishop, it seems to be an appropriate time to study and evaluate the schedule for the annual conference meeting.

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 23 Subject: Change Location of 2009 Annual Conference Session

Submitted by: Claudia G. Harrelson, Pastor, Stokesdale Church, Northeast District

Text: *Resolved*, That the 2009 session of the Western North Carolina Annual Conference be held at a place other than Lake Junaluska Assembly, and that the Committee on the Annual Conference Meeting be directed to give priority to such concerns as handicap access, the ability to move the time of the meeting, cost, housing, and parking.

Resolved, That the Western North Carolina Conference seek to hold an annual event at Lake Junaluska, in addition to the Gathering of the Laity, which can be more easily accommodated by the Assembly, and to help defray the loss in income to the facility by the moving of the annual conference session.

Rationale:

At the 2006 conference session, two petitions were brought forward concerning the annual conference meeting. One dealt with the need for greater accessibility; the second raised the concern that, with the statewide change for the ending of the school year, youth delegates, delegates in the public education system, and families with children still in school were either having to make special arrangements, miss all or part of the conference session, or be excluded altogether. Both petitions were passed. At the 2007 session, the Committee on the Annual Conference meeting reported to the conference that nothing could be done about either of these issues as long as we met at Lake Junaluska. Therefore, it is necessary for the annual conference to consider the location of the annual conference meeting if these and other often heard complaints about parking, rising cost, lack of space, etc., are to be dealt with. That is to say, there is no way for Lake Junaluska to adequately provide for the number of people attending the Western North Carolina Annual Conference meeting without enormous expense. It is also unfair to ask Lake Junaluska to make these changes solely for the purpose of accommodating the Western North Carolina Conference.

Methodists in western North Carolina have been meeting at Lake Junaluska for annual conference since 1957. There is no doubt that this conference loves Junaluska. However, there have been substantial changes in the intervening 50 years:

1. The Western North Carolina Annual Conference has changed. The number of voting members has grown to a number that far exceeds the capacity of Stuart Auditorium, not to mention spouses, families, and other guests. Additionally, the number of clergy and laity who need more accessible facilities, parking, etc., has grown as well. The overall age of lay members, like the overall age of clergy members, is getting older, and others with special needs, regardless of age, often feel excluded.
2. The Lake Junaluska area has changed. In 1957, Lake Junaluska was a quiet, fairly remote mountain retreat. Property and other costs in the area were relatively low, which allowed many clergy to purchase retirement homes in the area. Since there were few other places to eat, the Jones Cafeteria and dining rooms at the Terrace Hotel and Lambuth Inn were filled. In 2008, the Lake Junaluska area is now considered a resort area. Many restaurants, hotels, shopping centers, and other things have been built. One consequence of this is higher costs: Hotels charge seasonal resort rates, and the number of people eating meals off the Assembly grounds has escalated. Property costs are now such that few clergy could afford to buy a home at Lake Junaluska.
3. The world we live in has changed. Ever increasing technological resources, such as wireless Internet service and cell phones, are expected and vital for many. In 1957, most people did not have air conditioning at home and were more accepting of rustic accommodations. In 2008, the lack of air conditioning in Stuart Auditorium and the desire for more comfortable accommodations makes Junaluska problematic in cost and appeal. Fewer people are willing or able to drive to a not very centrally located meeting place for four days. While there are arguments to be made on both sides of the issue, what one generation considered to be a luxury, another views as a necessity. Lake Junaluska is a beautiful, warm, and inviting place. For those who have attended many sessions of annual

conference there over the years, there are great memories and much nostalgia. The annual conference needs to decide as to whether memory and sentiment outweigh the needs for handicap accessibility, flexible scheduling, parking, costs of travel and other issues.

Conference Action: Referred petition to task force authorized in Petition 22

PETITION 24 Subject: Trustees of Duke University

Submitted by: Richard V. Riddell, University Secretary, for the Board of Trustees, Duke University

Text: The following are proposed for election by the Western North Carolina Conference as trustees of Duke University:

Term to expire June 30, 2013: Gao Xi-Qing.

Term to expire July 1, 2009: Benjamin Kennedy.

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 25 Subject: Immigration and Trade Policy and Practice

Submitted by: Esther Megill, Biltmore Church, Asheville; Nola Smee, St. Paul's Church, Asheville; Alycia Johnson, Biltmore Church, Asheville; Elaine Gasser, Biltmore Church, Asheville; Pat Richardson, Asbury Memorial Church, Asheville; Joyce Anderegg, Biltmore Church, Asheville; LeGrand B. Smith, Clergy Member of Conference; Shelly F. Webb, Clergy Member of Conference; Jayne Smith, Biltmore Church, Asheville; Dot Sulock, St. Paul's Church, Asheville; Beth Griffin, Asbury Memorial Church, Asheville; Cameron Kempson, Biltmore Church, Asheville; Laura Wells, St. Paul's Church, Asheville; Ed McFarland, First Church, Waynesville; Lucy Gist, Biltmore Church, Asheville; Linda McFarland, First Church, Waynesville; Ruth Clark, St. Paul's Church, Asheville

Text: Whereas, Our Scriptures admonish us to care for the stranger and alien in our midst; and

Whereas, The U.S. Declaration of Independence proclaims that all persons are created equal, indicating that all in this land, documented and undocumented, are entitled to basic human rights; and

Whereas, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights declares that "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world"; and

Whereas, The United Methodist Social Principles urge us to advocate "for the rights of all migrants" and calls upon our churches to provide "service to such migrant people who come within their parish"—again without mention of documentation; and

Whereas, The recent flow of migrants into the United States is largely due to unjust economic and trade policies embodied in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and similar "free trade" acts that disadvantage and impoverish farmers in the Global South, depriving them of land and livelihood; and

Whereas, There is a rising tide of racist and anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States that violates all of the above and is unbecoming of and inconsistent with the principles of "liberty and justice for all" on which this country was founded and which it proclaims to the world—a climate that is fostering fear, hatred and violence in our land; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Western North Carolina Annual Conference call upon:

- a. All United Methodists to treat migrants with Christian love, hospitality, respect, and good will and to oppose immigrant bashing, discrimination, fear-inducing raids of homes and workplaces, and mistreatment by citizens and government officials.
- b. All United Methodist congregations to participate in community efforts to see that all migrants, documented and undocumented, are accorded courtesy, hospitality and justice, protected from verbal and physical abuse, and supported in their efforts to earn an honest living and maintain family unity.
- c. The U.S. Congress to redress the inequities in existing "fair trade" agreements by incorporating effective labor, environmental, and human rights protections and to provide for legal migration of workers and their families in all future trade treaties;
- d. Our elected officials at local, state, and federal levels to enact and implement comprehensive immigration reform, including the following elements:
 - 1) Family reunification.
 - 2) A path to citizenship.
 - 3) Worker protection.
 - 4) Legislation which will allow undocumented migrants a way to gain permanent legal status and access to services we take for granted.
 - 5) Human and civil rights.
 - 6) Border security, which will happen only when immigration laws are realistic and enforceable.

Resolved, That the Western North Carolina Annual Conference call upon all United Methodists to become informed on these issues and communicate with their senators and representatives.

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 26 Subject: Camp Tekoa Trustees

Submitted by: Board of Trustees of Camp Tekoa, Inc.

Text: The following are proposed for election as trustees of Camp Tekoa, Inc.:

Class of 2011: Brian E. Combs, Shelton Dunn Davis, David Moore, Jerry Smith.

Class of 2010: D. Michael Jordan, Daniel J. Lyons, Charlotte Miller, Donald A. Newman.

Class of 2009: Roland T. Barnhardt, David Speer, Candis Vaughn Walker, Tim Walker.

Ex-Officio (Conference): Cabinet Representative, Council on Youth Ministries Representative, Conference Ministries Advisory Council Representative.

Ex-Officio (Staff): James S. Johnson, executive director; Karen Rohrer, business manager; Mike Pruett, program director.

Conference Action: Adopted petition

PETITION 27 Subject: Rejoice! Publication**Submitted by:** Commission on Communications, Kelly Keesling, Chairperson**Text:** Whereas, United Methodists across the Western North Carolina Annual Conference have requested the development of a print communication and, in response, a new publication, *Rejoice!* has been researched and designed over the past two years to celebrate the life and work of United Methodists in western North Carolina; and

Whereas, A prototype of the proposed publication has been printed by the Commission on Communications and distributed to the members of the 2008 annual conference; and

Whereas, Funding for the year 2009 in the amount of \$80,000 will be required to cover quarterly publication and distribution of this resource to every church in the conference; and

Whereas, The budgets for 2009 as proposed by the Council on Finance and Administration do not include this amount; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Western North Carolina Annual Conference grant funding for the proposed publication in the amount of \$80,000 for 2009.**Conference Action:** Referred petition to Commission on Communications for further study

Yes, folks, this man was a district superintendent! Hurley Thomas incorporated considerable humor as he spoke on behalf of the 2008 class of retiring clergy at

the Saturday morning time of recognition.

All is in readiness for the annual service of memory and thanksgiving for the lives of the clergy, diaconal ministers, and spouses of clergy and diaconal ministers who have died during the conference year.