

SUBJECT TO FINAL EDITING

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MEMORANDUM NO. 1348

IN RE: Petition for Declaratory Decision from the Alaska Conference regarding the constitutionality of the relevant portion of ¶ 2008 of *The Book of Discipline 2016*.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

On June 2, 2017, at the session of the Alaska Conference, a lay member presented the following motion for Declaratory Decision:

The Alaska United Methodist Conference, as it is empowered to do in ¶2610.2(j), requests of the Judicial Council a declaratory decision on the constitutionality of ¶2008 which says, in relevant part, “¶ 2008. *Responsibilities*— The General Commission shall equip, *hold accountable* and partner with the Council of Bishops, jurisdictions, central conferences, *annual conferences*, local churches, general agencies and other connectional structures of The United Methodist Church...” [emphasis added]

JURISDICTION

The Judicial Council has no jurisdiction pursuant to ¶ 2610.2(j) of *The Book of Discipline 2016* [hereinafter *The Discipline*].

DIGEST

The Judicial Council does not have jurisdiction since the matter does not involve annual conferences or the work therein. ¶ 2610.2(j). There is no showing in the record that the question was germane to the work of the Alaska Conference. Our longstanding jurisprudence has interpreted ¶ 2610.2(j) to mean that a request that comes from an annual conference must be germane to the regular business, consideration, or discussion of the annual conference and must have a direct and tangible effect on the work of the annual conference session. *See* Memorandum 1277.

Dennis Blackwell was absent.

First clergy alternate Timothy Bruster participated in this decision.

October 26, 2017