

## Paragraph 4, Article 4 Vote Breakdown

by Rev. Leigh Goodrich

For 28 years, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) has attempted to pass an amendment to The United Methodist Constitution protecting the rights of women to membership in the local church. Our most recent attempt was an amendment to ¶4, Article 4 which guaranteed membership in the Church regardless of whether a person is male or female, married or single, young or old, or a person with a disability. The amendment was presented at General Conference 2016 and passed with a two-thirds majority. Then, it was brought to the Annual Conferences for ratification during the following 12-month period. The amendment failed to be ratified. Since the Council of Bishops' announcement that the amendment did not pass, GCSRW has received requests for more information. This "Women by the Numbers" looks at the ratification process, the votes by Annual Conference, Jurisdictions and in Central Conferences.

According to "The United Methodist Constitution" found in The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, "amendments to the Constitution shall be made upon a two-thirds majority of the General Conference present and voting and a two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members of the several annual conferences present and voting..."(¶159). This makes the process democratic and emphasizes the importance of every member's vote.

Below is the breakdown of the votes by annual conference as reported by the Council of Bishops. We have taken the liberty of highlighting those annual conferences in which the amendment to The United Methodist Constitution to ensure that women, like men, are ensured membership in The United Methodist Church, passed. Importantly, the ratification process by the Annual Conference requires counting each and every vote cast by the members of the Annual Conference passed by the requisite 66 2/3% in the particular annual conference. The aggregate vote received 61% instead of the needed 66 2/3%.

CENTRAL CONFERENCES	Yes	No	%
<b>AFRICA</b>			
<i>Burundi (no vote)</i>	---	---	
Central Congo	0	926	0%
Central Nigeria	0	205	0%
<i>Côte d'Ivoire</i>	---	---	
East Africa	50	160	24%
East Congo	791	3	100%
East Zimbabwe	0	450	0%
Eastern Angola	220	29	88%
Kasai	1	203	0%
Kenya-Ethiopia	0	94	0%
Kivu	94	7	93%
Liberia	1	955	0%
Lukoshi	10	240	4%

<i>Malawi Provisional – did not meet</i>	---	---	
Mozambique North	84	0	100%
Mozambique South	353	0	100%
North Katanga	0	602	0%
North-West Katanga	6	246	2%
Northeast Nigeria	0	201	0%
Northern Nigeria	0	248	0%
Oriental and Equator   Capoe/Kisangani	588	6	99%
<i>Rwanda Provisional – report w/East Africa</i>	---	---	
Sierra Leone	0	150	0%
South Africa	72	0	100%
South Congo	18	315	5%
South-West Katanga	45	280	14%
Southern Nigeria	0	368	0%
Tanganyika	0	83	0%
Tanzania	0	152	0%
<i>Uganda-South Sudan – report w/East Africa</i>	---	---	
West Angola	308	39	89%
West Congo	12	226	5%
Zambia	2	115	2%
Zimbabwe West	0	416	0%
<b>AFRICA Total</b>	<b>2655</b>	<b>6719</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>EUROPE</b>			
Austria Provisional	11	4	73%
Bulgaria-Romania Provisional	25	3	89%
Central Russia	8	35	19%
Czech and Slovak Republics	17	18	49%
Denmark	27	0	100%
Eastern Russia and Central Asia Provisional	11	8	58%
Estonia	8	44	15%
Finland-Finnish Provisional	20	3	87%
Finland-Swedish Provisional	19	0	100%
Germany East	87	19	82%
Germany North	111	6	95%

Germany South	265	12	96%
Hungary Provisional	17	12	59%
Northwest Russia Provisional	2	21	9%
Norway	92	12	88%
Poland	45	4	92%
Serbia-Macedonia Provisional	6	18	25%
South Russian Provisional	4	13	24%
Switzerland-France-North Africa	80	76	51%
Ukraine-Moldova	16	0	100%
<b>EUROPE Total</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>74%</b>
<b>PHILIPPINES</b>			
Bicol Philippines	21	8	72%
Bulacan Philippines	138	0	100%
Central Luzon Philippines	0	27	0%
East Mindano Philippines	76	1	99%
<i>Hundred Island Philippines – new conference, did not vote</i>	---	---	
Middle Philippines	87	0	100%
Mindanao Philippines	87	10	90%
North Central Philippines	0	35	0%
Northeast Luzon Philippines	6	10	38%
Northeast Philippines	0	154	0%
Northern Philippines	16	2	89%
Northwest Mindanao Philippines	49	7	88%
Northwest Philippines	178	5	97%
Palawan Philippines	28	2	93%
Pampango	142	0	100%
Pangasinan Philippines	57	0	100%
Philippines	116	16	88%
Philippines Cavite (PACC)	69	0	100%
Quezon City Philippines Est	14	51	22%
Rizal Philippines East	94	2	98%
South Nueva Ecija Philippines	45	1	98%

Southern Tagalog Provisional Philippines	31	1	97%
Southwest Philippines	48	0	100%
Tarlac Philippines	55	0	100%
Visayas Philippines	44	0	100%
West Middle Philippines	62	0	100%
<b>PHILIPPINES Total</b>	<b>1463</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>82%</b>
<b>US JURISDICTIONS</b>			
<b>NORTH CENTRAL</b>			
Dakotas	279	49	85%
Detroit	445	234	66%
East Ohio	445	391	53%
Illinois Great Rivers	404	367	52%
Indiana	662	205	76%
Iowa	810	168	83%
Minnesota	425	42	91%
Northern Illinois	469	25	95%
West Michigan	368	88	81%
West Ohio	776	435	64%
Wisconsin	389	76	84%
<b>NORTH CENTRAL Total</b>	<b>5472</b>	<b>2080</b>	<b>72%</b>
<b>NORTHEASTERN</b>			
Baltimore-Washington	611	84	88%
Eastern Pennsylvania	455	92	83%
Greater New Jersey	574	46	93%
New England	442	25	95%
New York	351	44	89%
Peninsula-Delaware	239	43	85%
Susquehanna	494	353	58%
Upper New York	799	116	87%
West Virginia	325	227	59%
Western Pennsylvania	414	336	55%
<b>NORTHEASTERN Total</b>	<b>4704</b>	<b>1366</b>	<b>77%</b>
<b>SOUTH CENTRAL</b>			
Arkansas	372	184	67%

Central Texas	403	125	76%
Great Plains	661	221	75%
Louisiana	365	155	70%
Missouri	576	143	80%
New Mexico	133	65	67%
North Texas	542	81	87%
Northwest Texas	42	184	19%
Oklahoma	370	250	60%
Oklahoma Indiana Missionary	82	12	87%
Rio Texas	618	195	76%
Texas	401	589	41%
<b>SOUTH CENTRAL Total</b>	<b>4565</b>	<b>2105</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>SOUTHEASTERN</b>			
Alabama/West Florida	327	262	56%
Florida	695	271	72%
Holston	478	284	63%
Kentucky	154	386	29%
Memphis	272	150	64%
Mississippi	652	233	74%
North Alabama	351	188	65%
North Carolina	519	409	56%
North Georgia	698	539	56%
Red Bird Missionary	20	1	95%
South Carolina	505	487	51%
South Georgia	239	316	43%
Tennessee	346	160	68%
Virginia	1137	435	72%
Western North Carolina	809	632	56%
<b>SOUTHEASTERN Total</b>	<b>7202</b>	<b>4753</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>WESTERN</b>			
Alaska	38	6	86%
California-Nevada	487	33	94%
California-Pacific	343	343	50%
Desert Southwest	320	25	93%
Oregon-Idaho	171	105	62%
Pacific Northwest	226	113	67%

Rocky Mountain	423	24	95%
Yellowstone	109	5	96%
<b>WESTERN Total</b>	<b>2117</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>29049</b>	<b>18317</b>	<b>61%</b>

Jesus tells a parable about a widow who goes before a judge repeatedly and is consistently turned away empty handed. She does not let his rejection dissuade her, but continually returns until eventually, the judge grants her justice, thinking, “because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she will not wear me out by continually coming.”<sup>1</sup>

In a world in which #MeToo is worldwide phenomenon; in a world in which women continue to make significantly less for doing the same work as men; in a world in which women are bullied on the streets and in churches, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women will seek to provide protection for women worldwide who seek membership in The United Methodist Church. The outcome of the ratification of this amendment has not dissuaded, but rather, energized members of annual conferences to take action on women’s equality issues. It is with that energy that we still work for the full and equal participation of women in The United Methodist Church.

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 18:5, [The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version](#)