



## WOMEN BY THE NUMBERS

# Women and U.S. people of color lose representation at General Conference

### INTRODUCTION

The U.S. jurisdictions will have fewer delegates to the General Conference of The United Methodist Church than they did in 2008. This has affected the representation of women and U.S. people of color as delegates. That's because the denomination's membership is growing in Africa, the Philippines and Europe, while membership continues to decline in much of the United States.

According to a statistical overview of The United Methodist Church provided by the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA), from 2005 to 2009 (most current data), the membership of the U.S. jurisdictions declined from 8,071,938 to 7,772,966, a decrease of 4%. The Central Conferences over the same period of time increased from 3,497,512 to 4,400,510, an increase of 26%.

Furthermore, during that same period, the Central Conferences increased their share of the total membership of The United Methodist Church from 30% to 36%. And, while this has increased the diversity of the General Conference from a global perspective, it has decreased the participation of women and people of color from the United States.

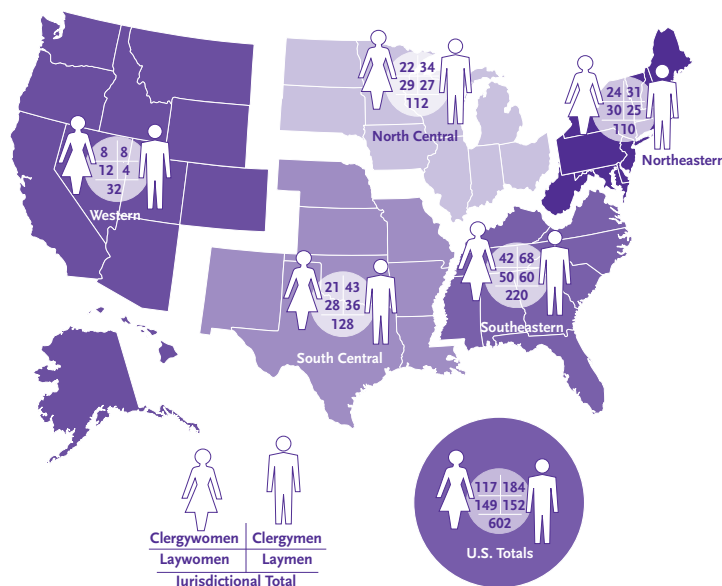
### 2012 STATISTICS

- » U.S. female representation at the 2012 General Conference is 44%, up from 43% at the 2008 General Conference
- » 117 clergywomen delegates represent the five jurisdictions, just five more than the 112 for the 2008 General Conference

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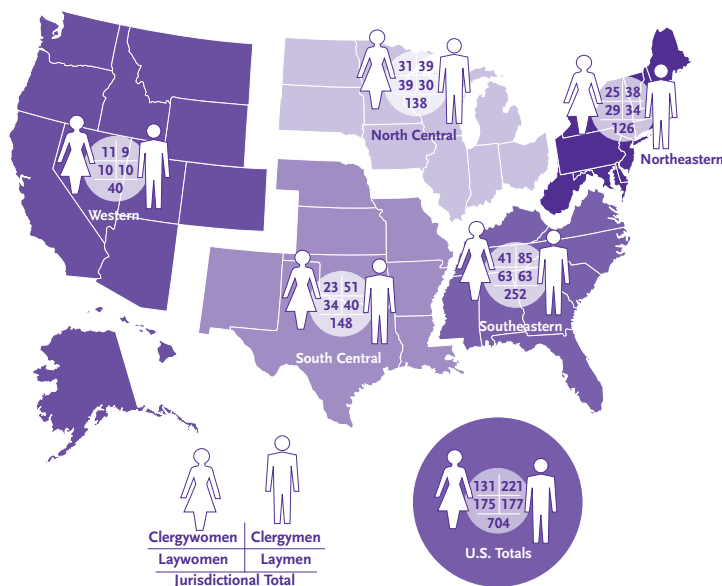
## 2012

### U.S. Clergy and Lay Delegates to the General Conference by Jurisdiction



## 2008

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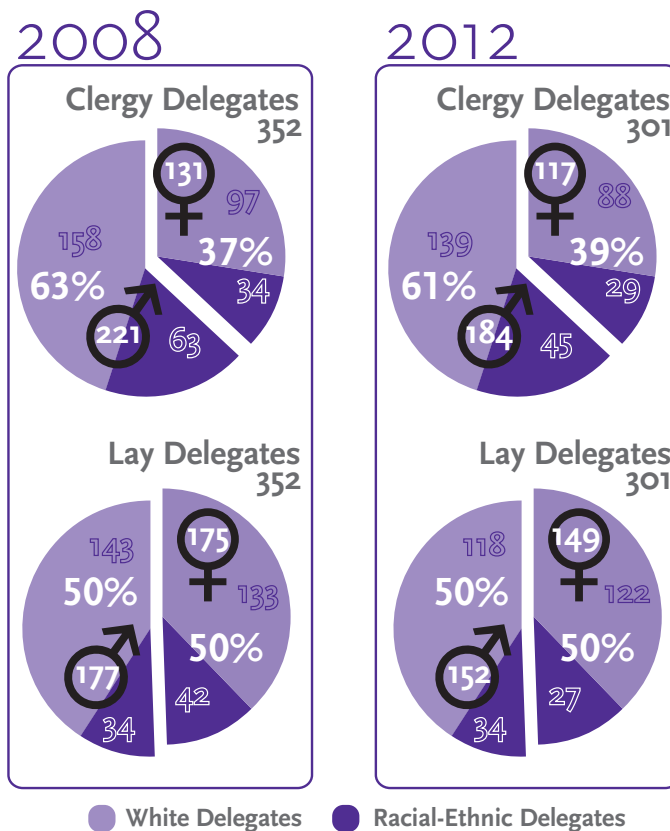
- » The 20 female delegates of the Western Jurisdiction represent the only jurisdiction where women are in the majority
- » For people of color, clergymen and laywomen lost the most representation from the 2008 General Conference to the 2012 General Conference
- » People of color delegates have fallen from 173 (2008 General Conference) to 135 (2012 General Conference)
- » People of color have 22% of the U.S. delegates at the 2012 General Conference (25% in 2008)

OVERALL

The number of U.S. female delegates has decreased from 306 (2008 General Conference) to 266 (2012 General Conference), a drop of 40 (see Table 1). During the same time period, the number of U.S. male delegates has decreased from 398 to 336, a decrease of 62 (see Table 1). As a result, these changes have slightly increased the percentage of U.S. female representation at General Conference from 43% (2008 General Conference) to 44% (2012 General Conference). From 2000 to 2012, the female delegates have declined from 324 to 266 delegates, a loss of 58 (18%), while male delegates have dropped from 506 to 336, a loss of 170 (34%).

Yes, all U.S. groups—clergymen, laymen and laywomen—have seen their numbers decrease over time; however, the great impact has been on clergywomen (see Tables 3 , 4 and 5). At 1992 General Conference, 81 clergywomen were delegates and by 2004 General Conference, that number had risen to 137, an all-time high (Table 2). Today, the decrease in clergywomen has reversed all gains over the past 12 years, so that the number of U.S. clergywomen to the 2012 General Conference (117) is almost equal to the 2000 General Conference (112). (Note: clergywomen represent 39% of the clergy delegation while clergywomen make up 24% of all clergy.)

While the number of Central Conference delegates has increased, people of color from the United States has lost representation over the past four years. The number of people of color has dropped from 173 (2008 General Conference) to 135 (2012 General Conference), a loss of 38 or 22%. The 38 persons of color represent 37% of the total loss of 102 persons by the U.S. delegations since 2008 General Conference. Clergymen of color took the biggest loss at 18 persons with people of color laywomen at 15. Clergywomen of color loss is at five persons, but the laymen of color showed no change. Unfortunately, no accurate numbers exist from previous General Conferences to track the impact of decreases on people of color.



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### NORTH CENTRAL JURISDICTION

The North Central Jurisdiction dropped its representation from 138 to 112, a loss of 26 or 19% persons from the 2008 General Conference to the 2012 General Conference. Women had their representation decreasing the most with a net loss of 10 laywomen and nine clergywomen. These 19 represent 73% of the total loss of representation by the North Central Jurisdiction (see Tables 3 and 4).

Persons of color had a net loss of 15 representatives from the 2008 General Conference to the 2012 General Conference. They followed the national trend with laywomen and clergymen suffering the greatest losses. Persons of color saw their numbers almost cut in half from 33 to 18 in the North Central Jurisdiction. Consequently, their share of the overall jurisdictional representation fell from 24% to 16% (see Tables 3 and 4).

### NORTHEASTERN JURISDICTION

The Northeastern Jurisdiction dropped its membership from 126 to 110, a loss of 16 or 13%. The female representation showed no net change staying at 54 delegates. The Northeastern Jurisdiction had a net increase of one laywoman and a net decrease of one clergywoman. The 54 delegates represent 49% of the total delegation (see Tables 3 and 4).

Persons of color also showed no net change. They had a net increase of four laity and a net decrease of four clergy. Clergymen lost three persons and laymen gained three persons. By holding their own, persons of color actually saw their total representation increase from 29% to 32% of the Northeastern Jurisdiction (see Tables 3 and 4).

### SOUTH CENTRAL JURISDICTION

The South Central Jurisdiction dropped its representation from 148 to 128, a loss of 20 or 14%. The female representation had a net loss of eight members (two clergywomen and six laywomen). The two clergywomen were both women of color, but only one of the six laywomen was a woman of color. Women delegates make up 38% of the South Central Jurisdiction, a one percentage point drop from the 39% at the 2008 General Conference (see Tables 3 and 4).

Persons of color had a net loss of seven delegates from 2008 to 2012. Clergymen, clergywomen and laymen had a net loss of two persons each. Persons of color fell from 35 to 28 delegates. Consequently, their representation dropped from 24% to 22% of the delegation (see Tables 3 and 4).

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**Table 1: Gender of Delegates by Jurisdiction**

	Female			Male		
	Total	R/E Total	R/E %	Total	R/E %	R/E %
<b>North Central</b>						
2012	51	10	20%	61	8	13%
2008	70	18	26%	68	15	22%
<b>Northeastern</b>						
2012	54	15	28%	56	21	38%
2008	54	15	28%	72	21	29%
<b>South Central</b>						
2012	49	9	18%	79	19	24%
2008	57	12	21%	91	23	25%
<b>Southeastern</b>						
2012	92	18	20%	128	24	19%
2008	104	23	22%	148	29	20%
<b>Western</b>						
2012	20	4	20%	12	7	58%
2008	21	8	38%	19	9	47%
<b>Totals</b>						
2012	266	56	21%	336	79	24%
2008	306	76	25%	398	97	24%

**Table 2: Clergy and lay female delegates by General Conference**

General Conference	Clergywomen	Laywomen	Total Women
1992	81	222	303
1996	107	221	328
2000	113	212	324
2004	137	206	343
2008	131	175	306
2012	113	149	266



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### SOUTHEASTERN JURISDICTION

The number of Southeastern delegates fell from 252 to 220, a loss of 32 or 13%. Clergywomen had a net increase of one representative while laywomen had a net decrease of 13 delegates. In actuality, the Southeastern Jurisdiction added two women of color clergy. Women have 92 delegates or 42% of the Southeastern delegation (see Tables 3 and 4).

The number of persons of color dropped from 52 to 42, a loss of 10 or 19%. The loss of 10 persons represents one-third of the total delegation loss from 2008 to 2012. Clergymen dropped eight representatives and laywomen dropped seven representatives, which were offset by the gains of laymen and clergywomen. People of color make up 19% of the Southeastern Jurisdiction delegation (see Tables 3 and 4).

### WESTERN JURISDICTION

The Western Jurisdiction number of delegates fell from 40 to 32, a loss of 8 or 20%. Females lost one delegate from 2008 to 2012 with clergywomen showing a net loss of three, while laywomen showed a net increase of two. Nevertheless, women make up 21 or 66% of the Western delegation, the only jurisdiction in which women

**Table 3: Gender and Persons of Color Clergy by Jurisdiction and General Conference**

	Female Clergy									Male Clergy									Clergy				
	White	Black	Native American/American Indian	Asian American	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-Racial	Pacific Islander	Total	R/E Total	R/E %	White	Black	Native American/American Indian	Asian American	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-Racial	Pacific Islander	Total	R/E Total	R/E %	Total	R/E Total	R/E %
<b>North Central</b>																							
2012	17	2		3				22	5	23%	27	5		2				34	7	21%	56	12	21%
2008	24	5		2				31	7	23%	27	6		3	2			38	11	29%	69	18	26%
<b>Northeastern</b>																							
2012	16	6		2	0			24	8	33%	22	7		2	0			31	9	29%	55	17	31%
2008	16	6		1	2			25	9	36%	26	7		3	1	1		38	12	32%	63	21	33%
<b>South Central</b>																							
2012	17	4						21	4	19%	30	8	1		3	1		43	13	30%	64	17	27%
2008	17	6						23	6	26%	36	9	2		4			51	15	29%	74	21	28%
<b>Southeastern</b>																							
2012	31	9		1	1			42	11	26%	56	10		1	1			68	12	18%	110	23	21%
2008	32	7		0	2			41	9	22%	65	16	2	1	1			85	20	24%	126	29	23%
<b>Western</b>																							
2012	7			1				8	1	13%	4	2		2				8	4	50%	16	5	31%
2008	8			2	1			11	3	27%	4	1	0	4				9	5	56%	20	8	40%
<b>Totals</b>																							
2012	88	21	0	7	1	0	0	117	29	25%	139	32	1	7	4	1	0	184	45	24%	301	74	23%
2008	97	24	0	5	5	0	0	131	34	26%	158	39	4	11	8	1	0	221	63	29%	352	97	19%



have a majority of delegates (see Tables 3 and 4).

Persons of color had a net loss of six persons, from 17 to 11. Clergywomen and laywomen had a net loss of two persons each while laymen and clergymen had a net loss of one person each. The decrease in persons of color from 17 to 11 saw their representation fall from 43% to 34% (see Tables 3 and 4).

**CONCLUSION**

As the United Methodist denomination continues to grow globally, the challenge for the U.S. United Methodists is to remain inclusive while its membership (and thus General Conference representation) gets smaller. Just because the U.S. delegations and representation are getting smaller, the decrease does not have to rest on the backs of women and people of color. Yes, the U.S. United Methodist Church is over 90% white, but the representation at General Conference—the highest decision-making body of the church — needs to be more than white. The United States — our mission field — is 35% people of color and growing. For The United Methodist Church in the U.S. to become the body of Christ, we need to become the inclusive and diverse church.

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**Table 4: Gender and Persons of Color Laity by Jurisdiction and General Conference**

	Female Laity									Male Laity									Clergy				
	White	Black	Native American/American Indian	Asian American	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-Racial	Pacific Islander	Total	R/E Total	R/E %	White	Black	Native American/American Indian	Asian American	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-Racial	Pacific Islander	Total	R/E Total	R/E %	Total	R/E Total	R/E %
<b>North Central</b>																							
2012	24	5					29	5	17%	26	1						27	1	4%	56	6	11%	
2008	28	9	1			1	39	11	28%	26	4						30	4	13%	69	15	22%	
<b>Northeastern</b>																							
2012	23	6		1			30	7	23%	13	10			1	1		25	12	48%	55	19	35%	
2008	23	6					29	6	21%	25	6		1		2		34	9	26%	63	15	24%	
<b>South Central</b>																							
2012	23	1	3		1		28	5	18%	30	3		1	2			36	6	17%	64	11	17%	
2008	28	4	2				34	6	18%	32	4			4			40	8	20%	74	14	19%	
<b>Southeastern</b>																							
2012	43	6	1				50	7	14%	48	10	1		1			60	12	20%	110	18	17%	
2008	49	10		3	1		63	14	22%	54	8	1					63	9	14%	126	23	18%	
<b>Western</b>																							
2012	9			2			12	3	25%	1	2		1				4	3	75%	16	6	38%	
2008	5	1	1	2			10	5	50%	6	3		1				10	4	40%	20	9	45%	
<b>Totals</b>																							
2012	122	18	4	3	4		149	27	18%	118	26	1	2	4	1		152	34	23%	301	61	23%	
2008	133	30	4	5	1	1	175	42	24%	143	25	1	2	4	2		177	34	19%	352	76	19%	