

Christmas Covenant Legislation

Christmas Covenant		U. S. Regional Conference	
¶ #	Summary of Proposed Change or Addition	¶ #	Summary of Proposed Change or Addition
9, 10	Exchange places with current ¶¶s 9. And 10.		
9 (was 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “central” conference(s) to “regional” conference(s) • Replace “outside the United States of America with “around the globe” • Add requirement that regional conferences be based on geographical division 	11 (new after 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There shall be a regional conference for the UMC in the U.S.
10 (was 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “shall” to “may” for existence of jurisdictional conferences • Jurisdictional conferences not limited to U.S. but may exist within any regional conference (worldwide) 		
16	<p><i>General Conference Legislative Power</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds the qualifier “except as provided for elsewhere in the Constitution” to General Conference (GC) authority for all matters distinctively connectional • Similar changes as noted in first two ¶9 items above, replacing • Change “jurisdictional” and “central” to “regional” conferences for GC duty to set basis and number of bishops • GC sets boundaries for regional conferences but no longer for jurisdictional; 2/3 rather than majority of annual conferences in the region must consent to boundary change • Add right of GC to prohibit by 2/3 vote changes to <i>Discipline</i> that would otherwise be adaptable by regional conference 	16.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deletes “outside the United States of America” but does not replace it with “around the globe”
28	<p><i>Central Regional Conferences</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar changes as noted in first two ¶9 items above • Allow for some differences in which portions of General Discipline apply to which regional conferences for transitional period ending 1/1/2033 • Initial number and boundaries of regional conferences: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A regional conference including all areas comprising the jurisdictional conferences 2. Each existing central conference, unless GC makes changes to existing boundaries 	New 32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional conference for Church in the U.S. with “duties, powers, privileges, and limitations as are hereinafter set forth” • To include all areas comprising the jurisdictional conferences
29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “central” to “regional” 	New 33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of USRC delegates determined by GC [proposed new ¶1551] • Delegates to be lay and clergy in equal numbers [same as existing ¶29]

30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “central” to “regional” • Remove sentence on first meeting after Uniting (1968) Conference 	New 34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USRC to meet as determined by GC (new ¶1552) [existing ¶30 specifies within year after GC]
31	<p><i>Duties and Powers of Regional Conferences</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “central” to “regional” • Exception to electing bishops in number set by GC for regional conferences with jurisdictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bishops elected by jurisdictional conferences - Regional conferences allocates regions total number of bishops among its jurisdictions • In region with jurisdictions, jurisdictional conference rather than regional conference sets annual conference boundaries • Change portions of <i>Discipline</i>, unless prohibited by 2/3 vote of GC (per ¶16.17), including <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Church membership conditions and duties b. Qualifications, powers, and duties of clergy, exhorters, deaconesses, and home missionaries c. Duties and powers of conferences at all levels below regional conferences d. Hymnal and ritual supplements and worship-related matters e. Basis for election of bishops within the region f. Rights of membership in UMC agencies, programs, and institutions g. Allow flexibility in annual conference structures h. Change chargeable offenses and penalties i. Enact other needed legislation • Exception for regions with jurisdictions for jurisdictional conference rather than regional conference to appoint appeals committee • Establish jurisdictional conferences within region, and abolish them or change names and boundaries with consent of majority of annual conferences 	35	<p><i>Duties and Powers of U.S. Regional Conference</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make rules and regulations for the Church’s work in the U.S., including adapting Discipline to the extent permitted by GC • Appoint a judicial court • Other duties and powers conferred by GC, but no authority over jurisdictional conference duties in ¶¶23-27 <p>[Several duties and powers cited in current ¶31 are jurisdictional conference duties in current ¶27, thus not replicated in this new ¶35]</p> <p>[Specific regional conference authority for Discipline adaptations proposed for regional conferences in ¶31, items a.—i., are not detailed in this USRC proposed ¶35]</p>
38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar changes as noted in first two ¶9 items • GC authority to establish and change boundaries or names of regional conferences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boundary changes require consent of 2/3 of annual conferences in regions involved - GC’s regional conference boundary changes do not require amending ¶37 (defines composition of the 5 jurisdictions) - Regional conference’s changes to jurisdictional boundaries do not require amending ¶37 	38	<p>[See ¶39 below, which has comparable provision authorizing USRC to make jurisdictional conference name, number, and boundary changes, subject to consent of majority of annual conferences involved]</p>
39	Delete ¶, GC changes to jurisdictional conferences, [now proposed as duty of regional conferences]	39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace “General Conference” with “United States Regional Conference” for changes in the number, name, and boundaries of jurisdictions

40 (new 39)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar changes as noted in first two ¶19 items • Setting number, names, and boundaries of annual conferences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By jurisdictional conferences in regions where they exist - By regional conferences where there are no jurisdictions 		
50 49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delete historical provisions for Methodist and EUB bishops elected prior to 1968 union • Tenure of bishops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life tenure if elected by jurisdictions or regional conferences including part of U.S. - Elsewhere, set by regional conference • Committees on episcopacy elected by jurisdictional conference where jurisdictions exist, by regional conferences if no jurisdictions 		
None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend “central conference” to regional conference” throughout the Constitution • Annual conference ratification of constitutional amendments above begins no later than 30 days after GC adjournment 		
540	<p>Central <i>Regional Conference Authorizations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar changes as noted in first two ¶19 items • GC configuration of regional or provisional regional conference requires consent of 2/3 of annual conferences involved for any name or boundary changes of existing regional (central) conferences • Add “United States Regional Conference,” defined as all areas that are part ¶137 		
541	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “central” to “regional” throughout 		
542	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “central” to “regional” throughout 		
543	<p><i>Powers and Duties</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “central” to “regional” throughout • Amend Discipline in accordance with ¶131 [see above] including items a. through i. • Delete: Existing provision for delegating <i>Discipline</i> adaptations to annual conferences • Include Constitution along with General Conference in sub-¶16 as authority for adaptations a regional conference includes in its <i>Discipline</i> 		
545	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “central” to “regional” throughout 		
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548	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “central” to “regional” throughout 		
		550 new	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorization for a U.S. Regional Conference, including all jurisdictional conferences (and may include territory not within the U.S.)

551 new	<p><i>Composition of U.S. Regional Conference (USRC)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All GC delegates to the immediate past GC • Reserves are delegates elected as GC reserves • 1 lay and 1 clergyperson elected by each regional conference outside the U.S. or its leadership body, with voice but no vote 	551 new	<p><i>Composition of U.S. Regional Conference (USRC)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All GC delegates to the immediate past GC • Reserves are delegates elected as GC reserves • 1 lay and 1 clergyperson elected by each central conference outside the U.S. or its leadership body, with voice but no vote
552 new	<p><i>Organization for USRC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet initially as the Interim Committee on Organization during GC • Then within the year succeeding GC meeting • GC determines date and place for first meeting • Thereafter, preceding USRC sets time and place for next meeting • May hold adjourned sessions as needed, presided over by jurisdictional bishops; bishops may call extra session and determine time and place • Presiding officer determines questions of order and of law, subject to appeals to the body and Judicial Council, respectively; questions or rules interpretation for governing its own sessions to be decided by the USRC • Can organize and incorporate executive board, committee, or council for legal, property, or other business transactions needed between USRC sessions 	552 new	<p><i>Organization for USRC</i></p> <p>[No mention of meeting initially during GC as Interim Committee on Organization]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet within the year succeeding GC meeting • GC determines date and place for first meeting • Thereafter, preceding USRC sets time and place for next meeting • May hold adjourned sessions as needed, presided over by jurisdictional bishops; bishops may call extra session and determine time and place • Presiding officer determines questions of order and of law, subject to appeals to the body and Judicial Council, respectively; questions or rules interpretation for governing its own sessions to be decided by the USRC • Can organize and incorporate executive board, committee, or council for legal, property, or other business transactions needed between USRC sessions
553 new	<p><i>Powers and Duties for USRC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act on various connectional matters and interests of U.S. annual conferences and jurisdictions or referrals from GC • Organize suitably and elect necessary officers for its work • Amend <i>Discipline</i> in accordance with ¶131 [see above] including items a. through i. • Changes to procedures for its annual, district, and charge conferences, including additional business questions for its own needs • Examination of jurisdictional, annual, and missionary conference journals and recommendations for journal content and format • Produce USRC <i>Discipline</i> including Constitution and <i>General Discipline</i> plus USRC adaptations granted by Constitution or by GC 	553 new	<p><i>Powers and Duties for USRC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act on various connectional matters and interests of U.S. annual conferences and jurisdictions or referrals from GC • Organize suitably and elect necessary officers for its work • Amend adaptable portions of the <i>Discipline</i> in [Specific items in Christmas Covenant new ¶1553.2 a.—i. not cited in this USRC new ¶1553] • Changes to procedures for its annual, district, and charge conferences, including additional business questions for its own needs • Examination of jurisdictional, annual, and missionary conference journals and recommendations for journal content and format • Produce USRC <i>Discipline</i> including Constitution and <i>General Discipline</i> plus USRC adaptations granted by GC [“Constitution” not mentioned]
554 new	<p><i>Records and Archives for USRC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide USRC journal of proceedings for GC to examine, copies to Archives & History and GCFA • Submit copy of each USRC <i>Discipline</i> adaptation to Archives & History and GCFA 	554 new	<p><i>Records and Archives for USRC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide USRC journal of proceedings for GC to examine, copies to Archives & History and GCFA • Submit copy of each USRC <i>Discipline</i> adaptation to Archives & History and GCFA

555 new	<p><i>Conference Agencies for USRC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish judicial court to hear and rule on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legality of USRC actions taken under <i>Discipline</i> adaptations - Decisions of law by a USRC presiding bishop on <i>Discipline</i> adaptations by the USRC - U.S. annual conference actions taken under USRC <i>Discipline</i> adaptations or bishops' decisions of law on such matters • Establish other agencies, commissions, or committees as needed 	555 new	<p><i>Conference Agencies for USRC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish judicial court to hear and rule on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legality of USRC actions taken under <i>Discipline</i> adaptations - U.S. annual conference actions taken under USRC <i>Discipline</i> adaptations or bishops' decisions of law on such matters • Establish other agencies, commissions, or committees as needed <p>[Decisions of law by a USRC presiding bishop on USRC <i>Discipline</i> adaptations not included]</p>
560	• Change "central" to "regional" throughout		
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567	• Change "central" to "regional" throughout		
None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling legislation (§§1500s above) contingent on ratification of constitutional amendments creating regional conferences globally • Enabling legislation is effective with ratification of constitutional amendments 		
Sec XVI	Standing Committee on Central <u>Regional</u> Conference Matters <u>Outside the United States of America</u>		
2201	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same committee name change as Section XVI • Change "central" to "regional" throughout • Add qualifiers that regional conference references in this paragraph are those outside the U.S. 		
None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wherever it occurs in the <i>Discipline</i>, change "Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters" to "Standing Committee on Regional Conference Matters Outside of the United States of America" • Changes to 2201 and Standing Committee name are contingent on and effective with ratification of constitutional amendments 		
None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wherever it occurs in the <i>Discipline</i>, change phrase "central conference bishop" to "bishop in a regional conference outside of the United States of America" • This phrase change is contingent on and effective with ratification of constitutional amendments 		

<p>507, New ¶ after 506</p>	<p><i>U.S. Regional Committee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee has legislative function • Composed of all GC delegates from U.S. annual conferences, plus 1 lay and 1 clergyperson elected by each non-U.S. regional conference or their leadership bodies (with voice and vote) • Assigned petitions pertaining to UMC in the U.S. and are adaptable by regional conferences per ¶¶ 101 and 543.7 • Operates in accordance with GC actions and GC Plan of Organization and Rules of Order amended to provide for the US Regional Committee’s work • Committee provisions expire with creation and functioning of USRC • Assigned petitions to be processed immediately before opening of GC • Committee actions to be reported and voted on by GC according to procedures for its legislation 	<p>507, New ¶ after 506</p>	<p><i>U.S. Regional Committee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee has legislative function • Composed of all GC delegates from U.S. annual conferences, plus 1 lay and 1 clergyperson elected by each central conference or their leadership bodies (with voice and vote) • Assigned petitions pertaining to UMC in the U.S. and are adaptable by central conferences per ¶¶ 101 and 543.7 • Operates in accordance with GC actions and GC Plan of Organization and Rules of Order amended to provide for the US Regional Committee’s work • Committee provisions expire with creation and functioning of USRC • Assigned petitions to be processed immediately before opening of GC • Committee actions to be reported and voted on by GC according to procedures for its legislation
<p>None</p>	<p><i>US Regional Committee Enabling Legislation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Regional Committee description and objectives • Convened by bishop assigned by Council of Bishops; officer elections per GC Plan of Organization and Rules of Order • Subcommittees determined by Commission on GC based on number and nature of assigned petitions • Items with 50 or less votes against prevailing side go on GC consent calendar for U.S. Matters • Consent calendar items removed in accordance with GC Rules • Commission on the GC will set other rules and provisions for Committee as needed • Rules for GC legislative committees will apply for matters where different rules are not specified • Petitions pertaining to U.S. matters which are adaptable by regional conferences to be coded accordingly • This enabling legislation effective on adjournment of 2020 GC 		<p><i>US Regional Committee Enabling Legislation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Regional Committee description and objectives • Convened by bishop assigned by Council of Bishops; officer elections per GC Plan of Organization and Rules of Order • Subcommittees determined by Commission on GC based on number and nature of assigned petitions • Items with 50 or less votes against prevailing side go on GC consent calendar for U.S. Matters • Consent calendar items removed in accordance with GC Rules • Commission on the GC will set other rules and provisions for Committee as needed • Rules for GC legislative committees will apply for matters where different rules are not specified • Petitions pertaining to U.S. matters which are adaptable by regional conferences to be coded accordingly

None	<p><i>Plan of Organization for a USRC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Committee on Organization (ICO) will organize and plan for USRC • ICO membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointed by Council of Bishops - 20-25 members with at least 3 from each U.S. jurisdiction and proportional representation from jurisdictions otherwise - Members are to be GC delegates from the U.S. - Ensure broad diversity: racial, young adults, persons with disabilities (special needs), gender - Two regional conference members elected by regional conferences from outside the U.S. to advise and consult with the ICO • ICO meeting costs and other expenses paid from General Administration fund • ICO Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chose initial meeting of USRC time and place - Work GC Secretary and Business Manager in planning first USRC gathering - Recommend committees and officers for first USRC gather, in consultation with Commission on the GC • ICO will cease to exist after first USRC gathering concludes, unless continued by the USRC • Effective date adjournment of 2020 GC, contingent on GC approval of a USRC 	None	<p><i>Plan of Organization for a USRC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Committee on Organization (ICO) will organize and plan for USRC • ICO membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointed by Council of Bishops - 20-25 members with at least 3 from each U.S. jurisdiction and proportional representation from jurisdictions otherwise - Members are to be GC delegates from the U.S. - Ensure broad diversity, including racial and gender [young adults, persons with disabilities not mentioned] - Two central conference members elected by central conferences from outside the U.S. to advise and consult with the ICO • ICO meeting costs and other expenses paid from General Administration fund • ICO Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chose initial meeting of USRC time and place - Work GC Secretary and Business Manager in planning first USRC gathering - Recommend committees and officers for first USRC gather, in consultation with Commission on the GC • ICO will cease to exist after first USRC gathering concludes, unless continued by the USRC • Petition effective only on GC approval of a USRC
None	<p><i>Regional Conference Structure Study</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and perfect new regional conference structure • Facilitated by Connectional Table and new Standing Committees created by GC for regional conferences • Results and recommendations go to 2024 GC • Effective on adjournment of 2020 GC subject to GC approval of constitutional amendments creating regional conferences globally 		