

PETITION TO THE 2016 GENERAL CONFERENCE
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

TITLE/SUBJECT MATTER: The Judiciary Within a New Global Structure

DISCIPLINE PARAGRAPHS: ¶¶ 55-58

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Yes

PETITION TEXT Amend paragraph 55 as follows:

¶ 55. *Article I.*—There shall be a Judicial Council. The ~~General Conference~~ Global Connectional Conference shall determine the number and qualifications of its members, their terms of office, and the method of election and the filling of vacancies.

Amend paragraph 56 as follows:

¶ 56. *Article II.*—The Judicial Council shall have authority:

1. To determine the constitutionality of any act of the ~~General Conference~~ Global Connectional Conference upon an appeal of a majority of the Council of Bishops or one-fifth of the members of the ~~General Conference~~ Global Connectional Conference and to determine the constitutionality or legality under the global Book of Discipline of any act of a ~~jurisdictional or central conference~~ connectional or regional conference upon an appeal of a majority of the bishops of that ~~jurisdictional or central conference~~ connectional or regional conference or upon the appeal of one-fifth of the members of that ~~jurisdictional or central conference~~ connectional or regional conference.

2. To hear and determine any appeal from a bishop's decision on a question of global law made in the annual conference when said appeal has been made by one-fifth of that conference present and voting.

~~3. To pass upon decisions of law made by bishops in annual conferences.~~

~~4.~~ 3. To hear and determine the legality of any action taken therein by any ~~General Conference~~ Global Connectional Conference board ~~or jurisdictional or central conference board or body,~~

32 upon appeal by one-third of the members thereof, or upon request of the Council of Bishops or
33 a majority of the bishops of a ~~jurisdictional or a central conference~~ **connectional or regional**
34 **conference.**

35 **4. To review, on its own motion and at its own discretion, any ruling by a connectional**
36 **judicial committee if it is believed that said ruling has such global import as to make this**
37 **necessary, including when a case had unrecognized implications for constitutional or global**
38 **church law.**

39 ~~5.~~ **4.** To have such other duties and powers as may be conferred upon it by the ~~General~~
40 ~~Conference~~ **Global Connectional Conference.**

41 ~~6.~~ **5.** To provide its own methods of organization and procedure.

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43 Insert new paragraph between ¶¶ 56 and 57 as follows:

44 **¶ 57. Article III.—There shall be connectional judicial committees in each connectional**
45 **conference. Connectional Judicial Committees shall have five members who shall be elected**
46 **by the respective connectional conferences. The respective connectional conferences shall**
47 **determine the qualifications of their respective connectional judicial committee’s members,**
48 **their terms of office, and the method of election by the connectional conference and the**
49 **filling of vacancies.**

50 **The Connectional Judicial Committees shall have authority to review matters of**
51 **connectional church law as follows:**

52 **1. To determine the legality of any act of their respective connectional conferences upon an**
53 **appeal of a majority of the respective connectional College of Bishops or one-fifth of the**
54 **members of the Connectional Conference in accordance with their connectional**
55 **disciplinary law, and to determine the legality of any act of one of their regional**
56 **conferences upon an appeal of a majority of the bishops of that regional conference or**
57 **upon the appeal of one-fifth of the members of that regional conference in accordance with**

58 their connectional disciplinary law.

59 2. To hear and determine any appeal from a bishop's decision on a question of connectional
60 disciplinary law made in the annual conference when said appeal has been made by one-
61 fifth of that conference present and voting.

62 3. To pass upon decisions of connectional disciplinary law made by bishops in annual
63 conferences.

64 4. To hear and determine the legality under connectional law of any action taken therein by
65 any connectional conference board or regional board or body, upon appeal by one-third of
66 the members thereof, or upon request of the connectional college of bishops or a majority
67 of the bishops of a regional college of bishops.

68 5. To have such other duties and powers as may be conferred upon it by its respective
69 connectional conference.

70 6. To provide its own methods of organization and procedure.

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72 Insert new paragraph before ¶ 57 as follows:

73 ¶ 58 Article IV.—Connectional Judicial Committees shall not have authority to review
74 matters of constitutional and/or global church law. Questions that include such points,
75 including when they include points of connectional and constitutional and/or global church
76 law, shall be referred to the Judicial Council.

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78 Amend paragraph 57 as follows:

79 ~~¶ 57 Article III~~ ¶ 59 Article V.—All decisions of the Judicial Council shall be final. When the
80 Judicial Council shall declare unconstitutional any act of the ~~General Conference~~ Global
81 Connectional Conference then in session, that decision shall be reported back to that ~~General~~
82 ~~Conference~~ Global Connectional Conference immediately.

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84 Amend paragraph 58 as follows:

85 ¶ ~~58. Article IV~~ ¶ **60. Article VI.**—The General Conference **Global Connectional Conference**
86 shall establish for the Church a judicial system that shall guarantee to our clergy a right to trial
87 by a committee and an appeal, and to our members a right to trial before the Church, or by a
88 committee, and an appeal. **This right shall also be respected by the connectional conferences.**

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91 **RATIONALE:**

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