The BOOK *of* DISCIPLINE

of The Methodist Church in Singapore



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THE
BOOK OF DISCIPLINE
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METHODIST CHURCH
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(Drafting work for amendments adopted by 2024 General Conference)

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EPISCOPAL FOREWORD

All organisations need a governing document that outlines how they work and sets guidelines for systems and behaviour. It is a document that explains what the organisation stands for. *The Book of Discipline* is that document for The Methodist Church in Singapore.

While it is not the Bible, *The Book of Discipline* sets out important boundaries and expectations for us. Members of the Discipline Revision Commission have put in a lot of time, effort and consideration to ensure this book remains current and relevant to the times in which we operate—so that while we are not of this world, we may still operate in the world, that the world will know Jesus (John 17:23).

My prayer is that this book will not be viewed as dead legalese, but a document that dispels confusion and helps bring clarity and direction into the good work which God has prepared for The Methodist Church in Singapore to do. *The Book of Discipline* belongs to all of us, and we are called to be familiar with it, so that we may serve the Church faithfully and in one accord.

I would like to record here our respect and grateful thanks to the members of the Discipline Revision Commission who have worked diligently to provide us with this revised edition of *The Book of Discipline* of The Methodist Church in Singapore (2026).

Bishop Philip Lim (2024-2028)
The Methodist Church in Singapore
March 2026

EDITORIAL NOTES

1 Arising from the decision of the General Conference in October 2004, all references to persons of one gender include the other unless the context otherwise requires.

2 The basic unit in *The Book of Discipline* is the paragraph (¶) rather than page, part, chapter or section. The paragraphs are numbered consecutively within each chapter and section. Some paragraph numbers are skipped between parts, chapters and sections to allow for future enactments.

3 The *Book of Discipline* is published by and its contents are prepared by The Discipline Revision Commission of The Methodist Church in Singapore, except for:

a) Part V, Chapter One, ¶¶801–806 of *The Book of Discipline*, "Constitution and Bye-Laws of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore" which is prepared by the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore; and

b) The Appendices to *The Book of Discipline* comprising:
- The Stewardship Charter;
- The Policy for Approval & Authorisation of New Building Projects & Extensions; and
- The Constitution of the Methodist Welfare Services which is prepared by the Methodist Welfare Services.

CONTENTS

Episcopal Foreword ..... page iii
Roll of Methodist Bishops ..... page 1
Roll of Annual Conference Presidents ..... page 3
Historical Statement ..... page 5

Part I
THE CONSTITUTION
¶¶1-48

Preamble to the Original Constitution as adopted in December 1976 upon establishment of The Methodist Church in Singapore ..... page 19
Division One – General (¶¶1-5) ..... page 19
Division Two – Organisation (¶¶6-27) ..... page 21
I. Conferences (¶¶6-9) ..... page 21
II. General Conference (¶¶10-14) ..... page 21
III. Restrictive Rules (¶¶15-17) ..... page 23
IV. Annual Conferences (¶¶18-24) ..... page 24
V. District Conferences (¶25) ..... page 26
VI. Local Conferences (¶¶26-27) ..... page 26
Division Three – Episcopacy (¶¶28-31) ..... page 26
Division Four – Presidency (¶¶32-39) ..... page 27
Division Five – The Judiciary (¶¶40-45) ..... page 28
Division Six – Amendments (¶¶46-48) ..... page 29

Part II
DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS AND THE GENERAL RULES
¶¶61-71

I. The Articles of Religion of The Methodist Church (1784) (¶61) ..... page 31
II. The General Rules of The Methodist Church (¶71) ..... page 37

Part III
SOCIAL PRINCIPLES
¶¶81-92

I. Our Methodist Heritage (¶81) ..... page 41
II. Our Methodist Theological Basis for Social Concerns (¶82) page 41
III. Our Methodist Social Principles (¶¶83-91) ..... page 42
The Sphere of the Family (¶84) ..... page 42
The Sphere of Economics (¶85) ..... page 45
The Sphere of Politics (¶86) ..... page 45
The Sphere of Community Life (¶87) ..... page 47
The Sphere of the Internet, Sciences and Technologies (¶88) ..... page 48
The Sphere of Social Well-Being (¶89) ..... page 50
The Sphere of Creation Care (¶90)..... page 52
The Sphere of the Church (¶91) ..... page 53
IV. Our Methodist Social Creed (¶92) ..... page 54

Part IV
ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION
¶¶101-775

Chapter One
THE LOCAL CHURCH

I. The Local Church and Conference (¶¶101-105) ..... page 55
II. Church Membership (¶¶106-143) ..... page 56
The Meaning of Membership (¶¶109-116) ..... page 57
Admission into the Church (¶¶117-120) ..... page 59
Children (¶¶121-125) ..... page 60
Youth (¶126) ..... page 62
Affiliate and Associate Membership (¶¶127-129) ..... page 63
Care of Church Members (¶¶130-133) ..... page 63
Membership Records and Reports (¶¶134-136) ..... page 66
Transfer and Termination of Membership (¶¶137-143) .... page 67
III. Organisation and Administration (¶¶144-170E) ..... page 70
The Local Church Executive Committee (¶¶152-169) ..... page 81

	Administrative and Governance Committees (¶170)	page 99
IV.	The Method of Organising a New Local Church (¶171) ...	page 107
V.	Transfer of Local Church (¶172)	page 108
VI.	Special Sundays (¶173)	page 109

Chapter Two
THE CONFERENCES

I.	The General Conference (¶¶201-210)	page 110
II.	Provisional Annual Conference (¶¶221-223)	page 114
III.	Mission (¶¶224-225)	page 114
IV.	The Annual Conference (¶¶231-239)	page 116
	Conference Boards (¶¶241-276)	page 126
V.	District Conference (¶280)	page 143

Chapter Three
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

I.	General Provisions (¶¶301-310)	page 145
II.	General Conference Executive Council (¶¶311-313)	page 156
III.	Finance and Administration Council (¶¶321-328)	page 162
IV.	Council on Archives and History (¶¶331-332)	page 169
V.	Council on Communications (¶¶341-343)	page 170
VI.	Disciple Agency (¶¶351-356)	page 172
VII.	Council on Education (¶¶361-367)	page 173
VIII.	Methodist Missions Society (¶¶371-376)	page 179
IX.	Council on Episcopacy (¶381)	page 183
X.	Council of Presidents (¶382)	page 184
XI.	Council of Trustees (¶¶383-385)	page 185
XII.	Discipline Revision Commission (¶386-388)	page 186
XIII.	Council of Governance (¶389)	page 190
XIIIA.	Council on Nominations (¶390)	page 192
XIV.	Affiliation and Ecumenical Participation (¶¶391-392)	page 194
XV.	Commitment to Renewal and a Wider Unity (¶¶393-394)	page 195

Chapter Four
CHURCH PROPERTY AND TRUSTEES

I. All Titles – In Trust (¶¶401-402) ..... page 197
II. Compliance with Law (¶¶403-404) ..... page 198
III. The Methodist Corporation (¶¶405-406) ..... page 198
IV. Episcopal Residence (¶407) ..... page 199
V. General Provisions (¶¶408-410) ..... page 199
VI. Building, Purchasing, Remodelling (¶411) ..... page 200
VII. Sale, Transfer, Lease, or Mortgage of Property (¶412) ..... page 201
VIII. Dissolution (¶¶413-415) ..... page 201

Chapter Five
THE MINISTRY

I. The Nature of Ministry (¶501) ..... page 203
II. The Local Ministry (¶¶502-511) ..... page 203
III. The Diaconal Ministry (¶¶512-528A) ..... page 210
IV. The Itinerant Ministry (¶¶529-544) ..... page 221
V. Deacons (¶¶545-546) ..... page 226
VI. Elders (¶¶547-551) ..... page 228
VII. District Superintendent (¶552) ..... page 234
VIII. Supernumerary Ministers (¶553) ..... page 237
IX. Retired Ministers in Full Connection (¶554-554B) ..... page 237
X. Termination of Annual Conference Membership of Itinerant Ministers in Full Connection (¶¶555-561) ..... page 242
XI. Ministers from Other Churches (¶¶562-566) ..... page 245
XII. Mission Deacons and Elders (¶567) ..... page 247
XIII. Responsibilities and Duties of a Pastor (¶¶568-569) ..... page 248
XIV. The Episcopacy (¶¶570-580) ..... page 251
XV. The Presidency (¶¶581-590) ..... page 257
XVI. Schools of Theology (¶¶591-593) ..... page 262

Chapter Six
DISCIPLINARY QUESTIONS
¶601

I. Organisation and General Business ..... page 264
II. Pertaining to Ministerial Relations ..... page 265

III. Concluding Business ..... page 268

Chapter Seven
JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

I. The Judicial Council (¶¶701-713) ..... page 270
II. Questions of Law (¶¶714-716) ..... page 278
III. Disciplinary Proceedings for Ministers (¶¶742-761A) ..... page 279
IV. Disciplinary Proceedings for Lay Members (¶¶762-775) ..... page 298
Flowchart for Ministerial Disciplinary Process ..... page 312
Flowchart for Lay Members Disciplinary Process ..... page 313

Part V
THE CONSTITUTION AND BYE-LAWS OF METHODIST ORGANISATIONS
¶¶801-892

Chapter One

Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore General Conference Level (¶801) ..... page 316
Bye-Laws of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore General Conference Level (¶802) ..... page 322
Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore Conference Level (¶803) ..... page 332
Bye-Laws of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore Conference Level (¶804) ..... page 338
Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore Local Level (¶805) ..... page 348
Bye-Laws of the Women's Society of Christian Service

of The Methodist Church in Singapore
Local Level (¶806) ..... page 353

Chapter Two

The Constitution of the Methodist Youth Fellowship
of The Methodist Church in Singapore (¶¶851-892) ..... page 362
I. General (¶¶851-855) ..... page 362
II. Membership (¶¶856-859) ..... page 362
III. Local MYF Committee (¶¶860-862) ..... page 364
IV. Junior Methodist Youth Fellowship (¶863) ..... page 366
V. Conference MYF Committee (¶¶864-867) ..... page 367
VI. Election of Officers (¶¶868-869) ..... page 368
VII. Annual General Meeting (¶¶870-879) ..... page 369
VIII. Extraordinary General Meeting (¶¶880-886) ..... page 369
IX. Finance (¶¶887-889) ..... page 370
X. Amendments (¶890) ..... page 370
XI. Quorum (¶¶891-892) ..... page 371

Appendices

Stewardship Charter ..... page 375
Policy for Approval & Authorisation of New Building Projects
& Extensions ..... page 386
The Constitution of the Methodist Welfare Services ..... page 395

ROLL OF METHODIST BISHOPS

I – Elected by General Conference, U.S.A. to superintend Methodist work in Southern and Southeast Asia

James M Thoburn*	1888	-	1904
Frank W Warne *(assisting James M Thoburn)*	1900	-	1904
William F Oldham	1904	-	1912
John E Robinson	1912	-	1914
William P Eveland	1914	-	1916
[*No Resident Bishop – Episcopal duties covered by Bishops John E Robinson and JW Robinson*]	1916	-	1920
George H Bickley	1920	-	1924
Titus Lowe	1924	-	1928
Edwin F Lee	1928	-	1948
[*No Resident Bishop – Episcopal duties covered by Bishops Ralph Cushman and Arthur J Moore*]	1948	-	1950

II – Elected by Southeastern Asia Central Conference

Raymond L Archer	1950	-	1956
Hobart B Amstutz	1956	-	1964
Robert F Lundy	1964	-	1968

* Bishop Thoburn was the first resident bishop elected by the General Conference to superintend Methodist work in Southern Asia. Prior to this, American bishops visited and presided over Annual Conferences in Asia as part of their overall responsibilities.

III – Elected by The Methodist Church in Malaysia and Singapore

Yap Kim Hao	1968	-	1973
Theodore R Doraisamy	1973	-	1976

IV – Elected by The Methodist Church in Singapore

Kao Jih Chung	1976	-	1984
Ho Chee Sin	1984	-	1996
Wong Kiam Thau	1996	-	2000
Robert M Solomon	2000	-	2012
Wee Boon Hup	2012	-	2016
Chong Chin Chung	2016	-	2020
Gordon C. I. Wong	2020	-	2024
Philip Lim Kian Leong	2024	-	

ROLL OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENTS

SINGAPORE-MALAYA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Ong Chaik Ghee	1968	-	1970
Denis C Dutton	1970	-	1976

CHINESE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Kao Jih Chung	1976	-	1984
Wong Kiam Thau	1984	-	1996
Fong Mow Hee	1996	-	2000
Khoo Cheng Hoot	2000	-	2008
Chong Chin Chung	2008	-	2016
Goh Nai Lat, Gregory	2016	-	2024
Lek Yong Teck	2024	-	

EMMANUEL TAMIL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Eddie Joseph Thoraisingam	1976	-	1984
Jesudian Daniel	1984	-	1992
Royson Prabhu Das Roberts	1992	-	1996
Robert M Solomon	1996	-	1999
Edmund de Souza (Acting)	1999	-	2000
Vinson Samuel	2000	-	2004
James Nagulan	2004	-	2012
Ranganathan Prabhu	2012	-	2016
James Nagulan	2016	-	2020
Philip S. Abraham	2020	-	2024
Saravana Kumar	2024	-	

TRINITY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

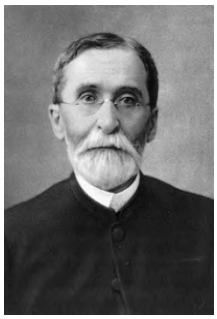
Nga Tieng Chieng	1976 - 1984
Ho Chee Sin	1984 - 1992
Isaac Lim Teck Poh	1992 - 2004
Wee Boon Hup	2004 - 2012
Gordon C. I. Wong	2012 - 2020
Stanley Chua Huang Seng	2020 - 2024
Reuben Ng Lee Keong	2024 -

HISTORICAL STATEMENT

(Revised 2026)

I. FOUNDATIONS

1. The Methodist Church in Singapore derives its origins and practices from the American Methodist Episcopal Church through the South India Annual Conference in the late 19th century. On 20 November 1884, on James Thoburn's initiative, the Conference, meeting in Hyderabad, appointed William F. Oldham as pioneer missionary to Singapore.[1] It was Thoburn's vision to extend the Methodist Mission from India, south of the Ganges, to Rangoon in Burma, then to Singapore, Penang and eventually to Manila, Philippines. Thoburn lived to see this missionary vision come to pass within his lifetime.



James Thoburn



William Oldham

2. The missionary party, comprising Dr and Mrs Thoburn, Mr Oldham and Miss Julie Battie, stopped en route at Rangoon, where Thoburn had founded the Mission in 1878. By God's grace, sufficient funds were raised here, allowing them to proceed to Singapore.[2]

3. Unheralded, the party that landed in Singapore on 7 February 1885 was met by Charles Phillips whose invitation to Thoburn and visionary experience had led him to meet the ship. A few nights of evangelistic meetings at the Town Hall and mostly street preaching, thereafter, were

[1] Theodore Doraisamy, ed., *Forever Beginning: One Hundred Years of Methodism in Singapore* (The Methodist Church in Singapore, 1985), p. 5.

[2] Doraisamy, *Forever Beginning*, p. 5.

followed by the first Quarterly Conference of the "English" church on 23 February. The planting of Methodism on Singapore soil had taken place "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit...."[3]

4. The work of the Mission quickly spread out in a number of related ministries: schools for boys and girls;[4] a boys' hostel attracting children locally and regionally; a girls' hostel which provided shelter for the homeless; medical work in Chinatown; churches, with vibrant Sunday School programmes and youth activities, in Hokkien, and Cantonese, as well as Malay and Tamil, then Foochow, Hinghwa and Hakka; and Scripture translation and publishing work pioneered by W.E. Shellabear who established the Mission Press in 1890. This later became the Methodist Publishing House (MPH) in 1906, printing bibles, publishing and printing evangelical, educational materials and doing commercial printing projects acceptable to the Methodist Church. In 1928, it was incorporated as Malaya Publishing House Limited, no longer fully owned and managed by the Methodist Conference.[5]

II. EXPANSION



Malaysia Annual Conference 1902

5. Following the initial success in Singapore, work spread to the main towns in Peninsular Malaya: Penang, Taiping, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur and

[3] Doraisamy, *Forever Beginning*, p. 8.

[4] Doraisamy, *Forever Beginning*, pp. 9-11.

[5] Doraisamy, *Forever Beginning*, p. 28; *Malaysia Message*, September 1912, p. 91; *The Business Times* (Singapore), 1 October 2002, p. 1.

Malacca. Town churches were twinned with schools which supported the churches. Expansion and growth in Singapore and Malaya graduated the Mission to the Malaysia Annual Conference in February 1902.[6] This was in keeping with Thoburn's vision for Singapore to be the platform for Methodist missionary expansion throughout the Malay-speaking world in Maritime Southeast Asia.

6. On 7 January 1936, by authorisation of the 1932 General Conference (USA), 14 Chinese-speaking elders in full connection, seven in a retired connection, together with one deacon, were transferred from the Malaya Annual Conference (a change of name by action of the 1924 General Conference[7]) to form the new Malaysia Chinese Mission Conference.[8] This was followed by a memorial to the 1940 General Conference for authorisation to become an Annual Conference.[9]

7. Further afield, with the Spanish-American War barely over, Methodism advanced to the Philippines in 1900 with Thoburn personally leading the way. With financial support, American missionaries were directed from Singapore to support the work which became the Philippines Mission Conference on 11 March 1905, and the Philippines Annual Conference in March 1908. In 1940, it became a Central Conference,[10] thereby enjoying a certain latitude which enabled greater self-actualisation to take place.

8. Following the Boxer War in China, Methodism in Malaya and Sarawak took on new impetus when Foochow Methodists were settled in Malaya and Sarawak. Several groups reached Sarawak in 1901[11] to form a firm base for the work to grow in Sarawak, later to include Iban work in 1937. The formation of the Sarawak Mission in 1947, followed by the Sarawak Provisional Annual Conference in 1952 and the Sarawak Annual Conference in 1960, reflected the vitality of the mission in that territory.[12]

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[6] Minutes, Malaysia Annual Conference, 1902, p. 16.

[7] Minutes, Malaysia Annual Conference, 1925, p. 9.

[8] Minutes, Malaysia Annual Conference, 1936, p. 24.

[9] Minutes, Malaysia Chinese Mission Conference, 1939, p. 29. Minutes of the 6th Session of MCMC are missing, and the 1946 Minutes refer to it as "Malaysia Chinese Annual Conference".

[10] Doraisamy, *Forever Beginning*, p. 43.

[11] Doraisamy, *Forever Beginning*, p. 42.

[12] *The Book of Discipline of the Methodist Church in Singapore* (1985), p. 6.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT

9. Work in Java and West Borneo began in 1905. It was organised as the Netherlands Indies district of the Malaysia Annual Conference in 1907, becoming the Netherlands Indies Mission Conference in 1918. In 1928, it was decided to transfer work in this area to the Dutch Mission NZV (Nederlandse Zendings Vereeniging) which had the most Missionary work in West Java at that time.[13] Thereafter, Methodist work was mainly concentrated in Sumatra which had started sometime in 1906**,**[14] growing into the Sumatra Mission in 1922, the Sumatra Provisional Annual Conference by 1950, and constituting into the affiliated autonomous Methodist Church in Sumatra in 1964.

III. FROM "MISSION" TO GENERAL CONFERENCE

10. This rapid expansion of Methodist Mission Work in Maritime Southeast Asia became the context for church administrative reorganisation. Hence, in 1888, after functioning as a mission outreach of the South India Conference, Methodist work in Singapore, the territories of Peninsular Malaya and the adjacent territory and islands "in which the Malay language is spoken 'became' a **Mission** under the administration of the Missionary Society". Following the Mission's separation from the South India Conference,[15] William F. Oldham was appointed its first Superintendent. In 1893, it became the **Malaysia Mission Conference**,[16] in step with its vigorous growth, and a stage towards becoming the **Malaysia Annual Conference** of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1902 when there was a sufficient number of Conference members to do so.[17] The 1924 session memorialised the General Conference to permit a change of its name to the **Malaya Annual Conference**, taking effect from the 1925 Annual Conference.[18]

11. In 1939, the Methodist Episcopal Church (USA) entered into a

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[13] *Malaysia Message*, January 1928, p. 6; Chang-Yau Hoon, "Mapping Chineseness on the Landscape of Christian Churches in Indonesia", *Asian Ethnicity* 17, no. 2 (2016): 228-247, p. 4.

[14] Doraisamy, *Forever Beginning*, pp. 43-44; Minutes, Malaysia Annual Conference, 1907, p. 22.

[15] *The Book of Discipline* (1985), p. 5.

[16] Doraisamy, *Forever Beginning*, p. 20.

[17] Minutes, Malaysia Annual Conference, 1902, p. 16.

[18] Minutes, Malaysia Annual Conference, 1924, p. 32.

union with The Methodist Episcopal Church South and The Methodist Protestant Church to form **The Methodist Church**.[19] All the Conferences in this region were now a part of this organisation.

12. By the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, the Methodist presence in Southeast Asia had been securely established in Singapore, Malaya, Sarawak, Sumatra and Burma. However, with the surrender of Singapore in February 1942, local leaders completely took over from the missionaries the administration of the Church under trying circumstances.[20] When hostilities ended in 1945, a period of physical and psychological reconstruction began. A new era had dawned.

13. In nearly all the territories of this area, Methodist work had become Annual Conferences: the Malaya Annual Conference, the Malaysia Chinese Annual Conference, the Sumatra Provisional Annual Conference and the Burma Annual Conference. By common consent, they were constituted as the **Southeastern Asia Central Conference** in 1950.[21] This arrangement permitted a certain latitude in decision-making at a time when the winds of political change all over Southeast Asia required a review of the mission and structure of the Church.

14. Political circumstances in Sumatra and Burma made it expedient for the Sumatra Conference to become an affiliated autonomous Methodist Church in 1964. The Burma Conference followed in 1965, leaving the Annual Conferences in Malaysia and Singapore to operate by themselves. With the political independence of Malaya in 1957, the creation of Malaysia in 1963 and the independence of Singapore in 1965, there was a "consciousness that the Church should determine its own life".[22] In the meantime, The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren in the United States had merged to form **The United Methodist Church** on 23 April 1968.[23]

15. In Malaysia and Singapore, autonomy from the United Methodist Church was achieved, following an agreement of all the constituent Annual

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[19] "Declaration of Union", in *Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church* (Methodist Publishing House, 1939), p. 11.

[20] Doraisamy, *Forever Beginning*, p. 81.

[21] Doraisamy, *Forever Beginning*, p. 106.

[22] *The Book of Discipline* (1985), p. 7.

[23] "Historical Statement", in *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* (1992).

Conferences. Application was made to, and an Enabling Act passed by, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church to constitute the affiliated **Autonomous Methodist Church in Malaysia and Singapore**. The Constituting Conference was organised on 8 August 1968 and adopted its own *Constitution and Discipline.* This was modelled on the prevailing Methodist Constitution and Discipline which had always determined the doctrines, structures and usages in current use, but now edited and revised to meet local requirements. Yap Kim Hao was elected first local Bishop of the Autonomous Methodist Church, and was consecrated on 18 August 1968.[24] Subsequently, in 1973, Theodore R. Doraisamy became Bishop of the then Methodist Church in Malaysia and Singapore (MCMS), serving until 1976.[25]

16. The process to restructure the Church to serve each of the two nations, Singapore and Malaysia, was the logical outcome of the movement to "autonomy". The Restructure Committee, appointed by the 1972 General Conference, studied and presented appropriate structures and legislation to the constituent Annual Conferences for a consensus in 1974 and 1975.[26]



Restructuring talks

17. **The Methodist Church in Singapore** (MCS) came into being when the General Conference met in Kuala Lumpur in December 1976 and passed an Enabling Act for the component Annual Conferences to constitute

[24] *The Book of Discipline* (1985), pp. 6-7.

[25] Journal, General Conference of the Methodist Church in Malaysia and Singapore, 1973, pp. 3-26.

[26] *The Book of Discipline* (1985), p. 7.

the two Methodist Churches in Malaysia and Singapore on 4 and 8 December 1976 respectively.[27]

18. MCS began functioning in December 1976, with the **General Conference** (GC) as its highest executive body. Representatives from the three Annual Conferences – the **Chinese Annual Conference** (CAC), the **Emmanuel Tamil Annual Conference** (ETAC) and the **Trinity Annual Conference** (TRAC) – make up the GC. In 1976, MCS had a total of 25 churches with seven in CAC, six in ETAC and 12 in TRAC.[28] Each Annual Conference was headed by a President, one of whom, Kao Jih Chung, was elected and consecrated Bishop.[29] This arrangement was modified at the 1988 General Conference, when the Discipline was amended[30] to re-define the role of the Bishop. Elected from among the elders of the three Annual Conferences, he would serve exclusively as Episcopal head. Following the revised Disciplinary provisions, the 1992 General Conference re-elected Bishop Ho Chee Sin, followed in 1996 by the election of Bishop Wong Kiam Thau, and in 2000, Bishop Robert Solomon. Bishop Solomon was re-elected in 2004 and 2008, Bishop Wee Boon Hup was elected in 2012 and Bishop Chong Chin Chung, in 2016. The election of Bishop Gordon C. I. Wong took place in 2020[31] and in 2024, Bishop Philip Lim was elected.[32]

19. Three years after the establishment of MCS in 1976, a combined worship service was held (1979) at the then National Theatre to celebrate together the Resurrection of Christ (Easter).[33] This was the **first combined worship service**, where more than 2,000 local Methodists from the three Annual Conferences participated. Three years later, the newly constructed Methodist Centre at Mount Sophia was dedicated in 1982, with offices for the Bishop, the Annual Conferences and the Methodist Headquarters' (HQ) staff.[34] It was also in 1982 that the **first MCS celebration of Aldersgate**

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[27] *The Book of Discipline* (1985), p. 7.

[28] Journal, Chinese Annual Conference, 1977, p. 116; Journal, Emmanuel Tamil Annual Conference, 1976, p. 26; Journal, Trinity Annual Conference, 1976, p. 24.

[29] *The Book of Discipline*, (1985), p. 8.

[30] Journal, General Conference of the Methodist Church in Singapore, 1988, p. 39.

[31] *Methodist Message*, October 2020, p. 3

[32] *Methodist Message*, October 2024, p. 2.

[33] *Methodist Message*, May 1979, p. 1.

[34] *Methodist Message*, March 1982, p. 1.

(John Wesley's life-changing experience of having his heart "strangely warmed") was observed with a series of lectures held at the Methodist Centre.[35] In 1985, MCS celebrated **100 years of Methodism in Singapore** with a Centennial Consultation of Asian Methodist Leaders (25 Feb – 1 March). Methodist Church leaders from 10 nearby Asian countries were invited to Singapore to participate and celebrate with MCS.[36] As part of this Centennial Celebration year, a church-wide competition was held in 1985 for MCS' logo which was officially adopted from 1 July 1986.[37] Six years later (1991), MCS was privileged to host the **16th World Methodist Council (WMC) gathering**, with more than 3,000 delegates coming to Singapore from Methodist/Wesleyan Churches from all over the world. The theme of the 16th World Methodist Council (WMC) in Singapore was: "Jesus Christ, God's Living Word for Today!"[38] In 1996, the **Social Principles of the Methodist Church in Singapore** replaced the former Social Principles inherited from the United Methodist Church, USA, found in earlier editions of our Book of Discipline from 1968 onwards.[39] The new Social Principles of MCS include references to societal issues specific to the local context. They remain the Social Doctrine of MCS. Wanting to promote intentional disciple-making through Bible study, the DISCIPLE Agency was set up under MCS in 1998. Later, **DISCIPLE Agency, Singapore**, translated DISCIPLE Bible Study materials (D1 to D4) into Mandarin, potentially benefitting Chinese-speaking churches in the region. DISCIPLE Agency, Singapore holds the worldwide rights for these translated Chinese DISCIPLE materials.[40] In 2000, the Methodist HQ in Mount Sophia was moved temporarily to Cluny Road in anticipation of redevelopment work. In 2003, the Methodist Centre office at Cluny Road was then moved to the current location at the newly constructed **Methodist Centre in the Barker Road Campus**.[41] Seven years later (2010), "the People called Methodists"

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[35] *Methodist Message*, May 1982, p. 1.

[36] *Methodist Message*, March 1985, pp. 1, 3, 5-13.

[37] *Methodist Message*, July 1986, p. 1.

[38] *Methodist Message*, August 1991, p. 1.

[39] *The Book of Discipline of the Methodist Church in Singapore* (1996), pp. 34-45.

[40] Report on Lay Training Centre at Chinese Annual Conference, 1993; Disciple Agency report at Annual Conferences, 1993; Disciple Agency report at General Conference, 2006 and 2010.

[41] *Methodist Message*, February 2003, p. 1.

celebrated **125 years of Methodism in Singapore**, with events such as the Methodist Heritage Day and Fair at the former Methodist Girls' School (MGS) site on Mount Sophia.[42]

20. MCS has always been guided by an **evangelical social conscience**. Taking the teachings of Jesus seriously, Methodists have tried to be "Salt and Light" since 1885, to the larger community in Singapore, where Christians have been a numerical minority, albeit an influential one. MCS today, by the grace of God, has become a 21st-century Asian Church, faithfully testifying to the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and its social relevance for human flourishing. Methodism in Singapore has often tried to integrate its Evangelical, Educational and Social Concern commitments.

21. **Methodist commitment to Education** has usually been combined with Christian Witness since March 1886, when the first Methodist Mission School was founded in Singapore. By providing education, the early Mission became socially relevant, serving tangibly the needs of the larger community. By 2026, MCS had 13 primary and secondary schools, a special education school, a junior college and a school of music in Singapore, with a total of about 21,000 students.[43] The **Methodist School of Music** (MSM), officially dedicated on January 1997, was registered in September 1997 with the Ministry of Education, Singapore, as a private school. In July 2002, it attained the status of public examination centre for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Among the Methodist schools, there are two Independent Schools and two International Schools, some of which offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) programme. The **Methodist Preschool Services Pte Ltd** (MPSPL) was incorporated in September 2020 for Methodist preschool management. The establishment of ACS (Academy),[44] in partnership with the Methodist Welfare Services, is a significant milestone

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[42] *Methodist Message*, March 2010, p. 1.

[43] See "Methodist Schools", https://www.methodist.org.sg/what-we-do/methodist-schools/; "The Educational Mission of The Methodist Church in Singapore", https://www.methodist.org.sg/wp-content/uploads/agencies/schools/methodist-schools-brochure-2026.pdf. The 13 primary and secondary schools are government-aided schools while ACS (Academy) is a government-funded special education school.

[44] Plans for the establishment of this collaboration was first announced in 2023 and the first enrolment was in January 2026. See https://www.methodist.org.sg/methodist-message/first-day-of-school-acs-academy/.

for MCS; January 2026 saw the first enrolment of ACS (Academy) – the first Methodist school in Singapore serving students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.[45] In 2026, MCS commemorated 140 years of Methodist education mission. For more than a century, the schools started by "the People called Methodists" have played a part in providing quality education based on Christian values and character.

22. **Methodist Social Outreach** involves ministry to people in need in Singapore society, with compassion and care for the poor and needy, the sick and the suffering. This is carried out mostly through the Outreach and Social Concerns arm of all local Methodist churches. Founded in 1981, **Methodist Welfare Services** (MWS) is a non-profit, multi-service, multi-denominational social agency, and an Institution of Public Character.[46] MWS is a member of the National Council of Social Service. In 2026, MWS, with help from local Methodist congregations providing volunteers and some of the funding required, operated a total of 24 centres and programmes for families and individuals, including seniors, youth and children, struggling with life's challenges, such as poor health, financial distress, strained relationships, and isolation. These MWS centres and programmes include three nursing homes, a destitute home and a girls' residence for mainly young females serving court-mandated probation. Additionally, MWS also has seven active ageing centres, home-based care and hospice services, five family service centres, a proprietary debt relief and savings programme, a marriage enrichment and parenting support programme, marriage and divorce support and family counselling, and a student care centre. In keeping with their stated intention to be Christ-centred, MWS has impacted more than 22,000 beneficiaries through these services, regardless of the client's "race, language or religion".

23. **Methodists and Christian Unity**. MCS works with other churches to strengthen Christian witness in our multi-racial and multi-religious society. A founding member of the **National Council of Churches of Singapore** in 1974, MCS is also linked to the **World Methodist Council**

[45] ACS (Academy) supports children and youth on the autism spectrum, without intellectual impairment, in accessing the National Curriculum across primary, secondary and pre-vocational pathways. See https://acsacademy.edu.sg.

[46] Ernest Lau, *From Mission to Church: The Evolution of the Methodist Church in Singapore and Malaysia:1885–1976* (Armour Publishing, 2008), p. 294.

(WMC). Before the formal creation of MCS in December 1976, Singaporean Methodists already participated in the 13th World Methodist Conference of the WMC, held in Dublin, Ireland in August 1976.[47] The WMC predecessor organisation, the Ecumenical Methodist Conference, held its first gathering in London in 1881. Singaporean Methodists had been participating since the 8th Ecumenical Methodist Conference held in Oxford, England in 1951.[48] Later, the **Asian Methodist Council** was established during the First Asian Methodist Convention in June 2002 in Seoul, Korea, with MCS as a founding member. The primary purpose was to bring together Asian Methodists to cooperate in Mission. Each national church had two representatives (a Bishop and a lay person) in the Executive Committee.[49] That first year, MCS was represented by Bishop Dr Robert Solomon and Mr Kim Seah. There is also strong Methodist support for TTC, founded in 1948, currently under four governing churches – Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and Lutheran. This union college provides tertiary-level theological education in Singapore, for pastors, church workers and interested, baptised lay persons, mainly serving the churches in the region.

24. **Methodist Missionary Work**. Since the late 1960s, many local Methodist churches have been continuously sending missionaries beyond the shores of Singapore to do cross-cultural ministry, bringing the Gospel to unreached peoples. Most of them have served with interdenominational missions agencies. Established in 1991, the **Methodist Missions Society** (MMS) is the missions agency of MCS. It is the first home-grown denomination-based missionary-sending agency in Singapore. MMS is committed to establishing indigenous, disciple-making churches especially in places where there is no Methodist church present.[50] Besides church planting, MMS carries out community development programmes in the mission field, often involving education and healthcare. In 2026, MMS' focus still remains mostly within the Asia-Pacific region, particularly

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[47] *1976 Proceedings of the Thirteenth World Methodist Conference*, ed. Joe Hale (World Methodist Council, 1977), pp. 28, 30-31; see https://place.asburyseminary.edu/wmcproceedings/10/.

[48] *1951 Proceedings of the Eighth Ecumenical Methodist Conference* (Epworth Press, 1952), p. 1; see https://place.asburyseminary.edu/wmcproceedings/15/.

[49] Journal, General Conference of the Methodist Church in Singapore, 2004, pp. 370-372.

[50] Robbie Goh, *Blessed to be a Blessing: The Methodist Missions Society* (Methodist Church in Singapore, 2014), p. 51.

Cambodia, China, Japan,[51] Laos, Nepal, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam.

25. In 2020, "the People called Methodists" gave thanks to God for **135 years of Methodism in Singapore** since February 1885.[52] By the grace of God, The Methodist Church in Singapore (MCS) in 2020 had grown steadily to become a strong Protestant church with around 45,000 members in 46 local churches. MCS, consisting of three Annual Conferences – CAC, ETAC and TRAC – reflects multi-ethnic Singapore. Collectively, Methodist churches in Singapore worship and do ministry with the various languages spoken in the nation: Chinese dialects such as Hokkien, Foochow, Hakka, Hinghwa, Teochew and Cantonese, as well as Malay/Indonesian, Mandarin, Tamil, Telugu, Tagalog and English.

26. 2020 was supposed to be a year of celebration, being the 135th anniversary of Methodism in Singapore. However, the rise of the deadly **COVID-19 global pandemic** in early 2020 necessitated "social distancing" to prevent the spread of infection, with non-family members required to keep at least one metre apart in public places. This was coupled with the temporary suspension of worship services by the authorities in March.[53] Christian Churches in Singapore, including Methodist churches, started to conduct worship services online, by YouTube and/or Zoom by mid-2020. Having greatly reduced on-site, in-person worship services by the end of 2020, Methodist churches in Singapore had by then learnt to do some form of ministry online and align with national advisories concerning the pandemic. Instead of many celebration events, 2020 became a year MCS learnt to survive and be resilient. Once again, God showed Himself to be faithful and that His grace is sufficient for us.

27. In 2025, MCS celebrated its 140th Anniversary marked by a year of activities. By this time, church membership stood in excess of 46,000 members in 46 churches.

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[51] Japan was added as a mission field in a partnership with Bukit Panjang Methodist Church in September 2025. See https://issuu.com/methodistmissionssociety/docs/hf2025-3; pp.7 and 33.

[52] *Methodist Message*, February 2020, p. 1.

[53] *The Straits Times* (Singapore), 25 March 2020; see https://www.straitstimes.com/politics/parliament-religious-services-suspended-but-places-of-worship-may-still-remain-open.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT

28. In looking back at MCS' history, we rejoice and give thanks to God Almighty for the "great things He hath done" — and for giving us the opportunities and resources to carry out His mission in this land and lands afar, to bring good news of salvation to those who hunger and thirst for the bread and water of life, to share His love with the uncared for, the poor, the infirm and those who bear all manner of suffering, and to face the challenges of the new millennium. We pray that God's Spirit will prevail as the source of our hope and inspiration, to the eternal praise of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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Part I

THE CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE TO THE ORIGINAL CONSTITUTION AS ADOPTED IN DECEMBER 1976 UPON ESTABLISHMENT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

We, the members of the Committee on Restructure of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Malaysia and Singapore, having received the mandate at the General Conference session in 1972, and having among its members representatives from the Chinese Annual Conference, the Sarawak Annual Conference, the Sarawak Iban Provisional Annual Conference, the Singapore Malaya Annual Conference and the Tamil Provisional Annual Conference, do hereby propose and transmit to our respective Annual and Provisional Annual Conferences and the General Conference session in 1976 the following Constitution and recommend its adoption by the processes which they respectively require.

DIVISION ONE – GENERAL

¶1. Article 1. *Declaration.* By the grace of God and the will of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Malaysia and Singapore, comprising the Chinese Annual Conference, the Sarawak Annual Conference, the Sarawak Iban Provisional Annual Conference, the Singapore Malaya Annual Conference and the Tamil Provisional Annual Conference, legitimately represented by their respective delegates, The Methodist Church in Singapore was constituted on 8th December, 1976 by the union of the Singapore components of the Chinese

Annual Conference, the Singapore Malaya Annual Conference and the Tamil Provisional Annual Conference. The Malaysian and Singapore components and the Tamil Provisional Annual Conference and the Methodist Church in Malaysia and The Methodist Church in Singapore may maintain such ties as they so desire.

¶2. Article 2. *Name.* The name of the Church shall be The Methodist Church in Singapore.

¶3. Article 3. *Articles of Religion.* There shall be Articles of Religion for the Church.

¶3A. Article 3A. *Purpose.* The purpose of the Methodist Church in Singapore is to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to all in Singapore and around the world; love God and our neighbour; share God's love with all, especially the poor and needy; "spreading Scriptural Holiness throughout the land"; and evidence our desire for salvation by following the General Rules of The Methodist Church (elaborated in ¶71): *Am. 2024*

1. Do no harm
2. Do good
3. Attend upon all the ordinances of God.

¶4. Article 4. *Inclusiveness of the Church.* The Methodist Church in Singapore is a part of the Church Universal, which is one Body in Christ. Therefore all persons shall be eligible to attend its worship services, to participate in its programmes and, when they take the appropriate vows, to be admitted into the membership of any local church in the connection. In The Methodist Church in Singapore no conference or other organisational unit of the Church shall be so structured as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, colour, national origin or economic condition. *Adopted 1992*

¶5. Article 5. *Titles to Properties.* All title deeds of real property of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall be held in the name of 'The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore', a body corporate incorporated under and by virtue of The Methodist Episcopal Location Board Ordinance, Cap. 368 *Adopted 1992*

(1985 Revised Edition).

DIVISION TWO – ORGANISATION

Section I. Conferences

¶6. Article 6. There shall be a General Conference for the entire Church with such powers, duties and privileges as are hereinafter set forth.

¶7. Article 7. There shall be Annual Conferences as the fundamental bodies of the Church, and if necessary Provisional Annual Conferences, with such powers, duties and privileges as are hereinafter set forth.

¶8. Article 8. There may be District Conferences in an Annual Conference with such powers, duties and privileges as are hereinafter set forth.

¶9. Article 9. There shall be a Local Conference for each church or a number of congregations with such powers, duties and privileges as are hereinafter set forth.

Section II. General Conference

¶10. Article 10. The General Conference shall be composed of such number of delegates as shall be determined by the General Conference provided always that there shall be an equal number of ministerial and lay delegates to be elected by the Annual and Provisional Annual Conferences. *Am. 1996*

¶11. Article 11. The General Conference shall meet once in four years at such time and in such place as shall be determined by the General Conference or by its Executive Council.

¶12. Article 12. A special session of General Conference, possessing the authority and exercising all the powers of the General Conference, may be called by the Executive Council, or in such manner as the General Conference may from time to time prescribe to meet at such time and in such place as may be stated in the call. Such special session of the General Conference shall be composed of

the delegates to the preceding General Conference except that when a particular Annual Conference shall prefer to have a new election of delegates it may do so. The purpose of such special session shall be stated in the call and only such business shall be transacted as in harmony with the purpose stated in such call.

¶13. Article 13. The General Conference shall fix the ratio and basis of representation in the General Conference from the Annual Conferences and Provisional Annual Conferences.

¶14. Article 14. The General Conference shall have full legislative power and authority:

1. To define and fix the conditions, privileges and duties of church membership.

2. To define and fix the powers and duties of elders, deacons, supply pastors, local preachers and deaconesses.

3. To define and fix the powers and duties of Annual Conferences, Provisional Annual Conferences, Missionary Conferences and Missions, District Conferences, Local Conferences and Church Conferences. *Am. 1996*

4. To provide for the organisation, promotion and administration of work of the Church outside its national boundaries.

5. To determine the basis upon which the bishop shall be elected. *Am. 1996*

6. To define and fix the powers, duties and privileges of the episcopacy, and to provide for the discontinuance of a bishop because of impairment of health or inefficiency or unacceptability. *Am. 1996*

7. To define and fix the powers, duties and privileges of presidents of Annual or Provisional Annual Conferences, to set the basis upon which presidents shall be elected, and to provide for the discontinuance of a president because of impairment of health or inefficiency or unacceptability. *Am. 1996*

8. To determine the basis for the establishment of an annual conference and to authorise its establishment with a minimum membership of twenty five ministers in full connection; provided that there shall be no annual conference with a membership of fewer *Am. 1996*

than ten ministers in full connection, and provided further that for the establishment of The Methodist Church in Singapore the membership number shall not apply to its component member conferences. Moreover, the component members which have been provisional annual conferences shall for the purposes of the establishment of The Methodist Church in Singapore be known as annual conferences.

9. To determine the basis for the establishment of a provisional annual conference and to authorise its establishment with a minimum membership of ten ministers in full connection, provided that there shall be no annual conference with a membership of fewer than five ministers in full connection. *Am. 1996*

10. To change the number, names, bases, and boundaries of the Annual Conferences upon the consent of a majority of Annual Conferences involved. *Am. 1996*

11. To regulate all matters relating to the form and mode of worship, subject to the limitations of the first Restrictive Rule. (See Article 15.) *ed. 2020*

12. To provide a judicial system and a method of judicial procedure for the Church.

13. To determine and provide for the raising and distribution of funds necessary to carry on the work of the Church.

14. To initiate and to direct all connectional enterprises of the Church and to provide councils for their promotion and administration.

15. To establish such councils or bodies for the general work of the Church as may be deemed advisable.

16. To ensure fair and equitable representation from all groups at all levels of our church life, with special consideration for and in consultation with existing minority groups.

17. To enact such other legislation as may be necessary in consonance with the Constitution of the Church.

Section III. Restrictive Rules

¶15. Article 15. The General Conference shall not revoke,

alter or change our Articles of Religion or establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine. (¶61)

¶16. Article 16. The General Conference shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government so as to do away with episcopacy or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency.

¶17. Article 17. The General Conference shall not revoke or change the General Rules of our United Societies. (¶71)

Section IV. Annual Conferences

¶18. Article 18. The Annual Conference shall be composed of the following:

1. Ministerial members:

a) all travelling preachers in full connection with it (including its president and retired ministers);

b) all approved supply pastors with full-time appointment to churches; and

2. Lay members:

a) the conference vice-president (if elected);

b) the conference lay leader;

c) the conference treasurer;

d) chairperson of the board on finance; and

e) conference president of the Women's Society of Christian Service, and the heads of such other organisations as the Annual Conference may have designated for such purpose;

f) such number of lay delegates from each local church as determined pursuant to Articles 19 and 20.

3. The conference secretary. *Am. 1996*

¶19. Article 19. The number of lay delegates to the Annual Conference from each local church shall be determined on the following basis: *Am. 1996*

1. Each local church shall be entitled to at least one lay delegate. *Am. 1996*

2. Where a local church has more than one minister in full *Am. 1996*

connection appointed to it, the church shall be entitled to one lay delegate for each such minister.

3. Each local church shall be entitled to one additional lay delegate for every 200 members or part thereof in excess of the first 200 members provided that no local church with less than 1,500 members shall have more than three lay delegates unless it has more than three ministers in full connection appointed to it. *Am. 1996*

4. A local church with 1,500 members or more shall be entitled to one additional lay delegate for every 1,500 members or part thereof in excess of the first 1,500 members provided that no such church shall have more than five lay delegates. *Am. 1996*

¶20. Article 20. Lay delegates to the Annual Conference shall be not less than twenty-one years of age, and have been for the four years preceding their election, members in good standing of The Methodist Church in Singapore. This restriction shall not apply to the lay members of the Annual Conference listed by office in Article 18.2e. *Am. 1996*

¶21. Article 21. The Annual Conference is the fundamental body in the Church, and as such shall have the right to vote on all constitutional amendments, on the election of the ministerial and lay delegates to the General Conference, on all matters relating to the character and conference relations of its ministerial members, and on the ordination of ministers and such other rights as have not been delegated to the General Conference under the Constitution, with the exception that the lay members may not vote on matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of ministers. It shall discharge such duties and exercise such powers as the General Conference under the Constitution may determine.

¶22. **Article 22.** The Annual Conference shall elect ministerial and lay delegates to the General Conference in the manner provided in Articles 23 and 24 in this section. The persons first elected up to the number determined by the ratio for the representation in the General Conference shall be representatives in that body. Additional delegates shall in the order of their election be the reserve delegates to the General Conference. *ed. 2006*

¶23. Article 23. The ministerial delegates to the General Conference shall be elected by the members of the Annual Conference or Provisional Annual Conference, provided that such delegates shall have been travelling preachers in The Methodist Church in Singapore and are in full connection with the Annual Conference electing them when elected.

¶24. Article 24. The lay delegates to the General Conference shall be elected by the members of the Annual Conference or Provisional Annual Conference, provided that such delegates shall have been members of The Methodist Church in Singapore during the time of their election and are members thereof within the Annual Conference or Provisional Annual Conference electing them. *Am. 1996*

Section V. District Conferences

¶25. Article 25. There may be organised in an Annual Conference, District Conferences composed of such persons and vested with such powers as the General Conference may determine.

Section VI. Local Conferences

¶26. Article 26. There shall be organised in each church or charge a Local Conference composed of such persons and vested with such powers as the General Conference shall provide.

¶27. Article 27. *Election of Church Officers.* Unless the General Conference shall order otherwise, the officers of the church or churches constituting a charge shall be elected by the Local Conference or by the members of the said church or churches at a meeting called for that purpose, as may be arranged by the Local Conference.

DIVISION THREE – EPISCOPACY

¶28. Article 28. There shall be term episcopacy in The Methodist Church in Singapore, and the said episcopacy shall have such powers, duties and privileges, as are herein set forth. *Am. 1996*

¶29. Article 29. There shall be a bishop in The Methodist Church in Singapore.

¶30. Article 30. The bishop shall be elected by the General Conference and consecrated in the historic manner at such time and place as may be fixed by the General Conference.

¶31. Article 31. A bishop presiding at the General Conference shall decide all questions of law coming before the bishop in the regular business of a session; provided that such questions be presented in writing and that the decisions be recorded in the journal of the conference. *Am. 1996*

Such an episcopal decision shall not be authoritative except for the pending case until it shall have been passed by the Judicial Council. All decisions of law made by the bishop shall be reported annually.

DIVISION FOUR – PRESIDENCY

¶32. Article 32. There shall be term presidency for each annual conference with such powers, duties, and privileges as the General Conference shall prescribe. *Am. 1996*

¶33. Article 33. There shall be a president in each Annual Conference.

¶34. Article 34. The presidents shall be elected by the respective Annual Conferences and installed at such time and place as the Annual Conferences shall determine.

¶35. Article 35. A president presiding over an Annual Conference shall decide all questions of law coming before the president in the regular business of a session; provided that such questions be presented in writing and that the president's decision be recorded in the journal of the conference. *Am. 1996*

Such a presidential decision shall not be authoritative except for the pending case until it shall have been passed by the Judicial Council. All decisions of law made by the president shall be reported annually, with a syllabus of the same to the Judicial Council, which shall affirm, modify or reverse them.

¶36. Article 36. Presidents of Annual Conferences shall preside at all sessions of their respective annual conferences except as provided under ¶233.4. *Am. 1996*

¶37. Article 37. In each Annual Conference there shall be one or more district superintendents who shall be appointed by the president after consultation with the conference Executive Board. District superintendents shall assist the president and have such responsibilities and term of office as the General Conference may determine. *Am. 1996*

¶38. Article 38. Presidents of Annual Conferences shall, after consultation with the Board of Appointments, appoint ministers to the charges or other conference workers, and they shall have such responsibilities and authority as the General Conference shall prescribe. *Am. 1996*

¶39. Article 39. A vice-president may be elected in every Annual or Provisional Annual Conference.

DIVISION FIVE – THE JUDICIARY

¶40. Article 40. The General Conference shall establish for The Methodist Church in Singapore a system of judiciary which shall provide and guarantee to all members of the church, both ministerial and lay, the right to trial and of appeal.

¶41. Article 41. There shall be a Judicial Council of The Methodist Church in Singapore, which shall be functionally independent within the framework of the Church.

¶42. Article 42. The General Conference shall determine the number and qualification of the members of the Judicial Council, their terms of office, the method of their election and the filling of vacancies in the Council.

¶43. Article 43. The Judicial Council shall have authority:

1. To determine the constitutionality of any act of the General Conference upon an appeal of the bishop, or one-fifth of the members of the General Conference.

2. To hear and determine any appeal from a bishop's or president's decision on a question of law made in the Annual

Conference when the said appeal has been made by one-fifth of that conference present and voting.

3. To pass upon decisions of law made by the bishop or presidents in Annual Conferences.

4. To hear and determine the legality of any action taken therein by any General Conference Executive Council upon appeal by one-third of the members thereof, or upon request of the bishop.

5. To have such other duties and powers as may be conferred upon it by the General Conference.

6. To provide its own methods of organisation and procedure.

¶44. Article 44. All decisions of the Judicial Council shall be final. When the Judicial Council shall declare unconstitutional any act of the General Conference then in session, that decision shall be reported back to that General Conference immediately.

¶45. Article 45. The General Conference shall not do away with the privileges of ministers of right to trial by a committee and of appeal; neither shall it do away with the privileges of members of right to trial before the church or by a committee, and of appeal.

DIVISION SIX – AMENDMENTS

¶46. Article 46. 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, except in the case of the Restrictive Rules which shall require a three-fourths majority of all the members of the Annual Conference present and voting. The vote, after being completed, shall be canvassed by the president, and the amendment voted upon shall become effective upon their announcement of its having received the required majority. *Am. 1996*

¶47. Article 47. Amendments to the Constitution may originate in either the General Conference or the Annual Conferences.

¶48. Article 48. Amendments to the Constitution shall not take effect until they are approved by the Commissioner of Charities, Singapore. *Am. 2000*

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Part II

DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS AND THE GENERAL RULES

¶61. THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION OF THE METHODIST CHURCH (1784)[54]

Article I. – Of Faith in the Holy Trinity

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Article II. – Of the Word, or the Son of God, who was made very Man

The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided; whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.

Article III. – Of the Resurrection of Christ

Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

Article IV. – Of the Holy Ghost

The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

Article V. – Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation

The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever

[54] Protected by Article 15.

is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scriptures we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority was never any doubt in the church. The names of the canonical books are:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, The First Book of Samuel, The Second Book of Samuel, The First Book of Kings, The Second Book of Kings, The First Book of Chronicles, The Second Book of Chronicles, The Book of Ezra, The Book of Nehemiah, The Book of Esther, The Book of Job, The Psalms, The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes or the Preacher, Cantica or Song of Solomon, Four Prophets the Greater, Twelve Prophets the Less.

All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.

Article VI. – Of the Old Testament

The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses as touching ceremonies and rites doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.

Article VII. – Of Original or Birth Sin

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

Article VIII. – Of Free Will

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

Article IX. – Of the Justification of Man

We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

Article X. – Of Good Works

Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

Article XI. – Of Works of Supererogation

Voluntary works – besides, over and above God's commandments – which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required; whereas Christ saith plainly: When ye have done all that is commanded of you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

Article XII. – Of Sin after Justification

Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Spirit, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification: after we have received the Holy Spirit, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and, by the grace of God, rise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here; or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

Article XIII. – Of the Church

The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

Article XIV. – Of Purgatory

The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardon, worshipping, and adoration,

as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but repugnant to the Word of God.

Article XV. – Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People Understand

It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church, to have public prayer in the church, or to administer the Sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people.

Article XVI. – Of the Sacraments

Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's goodwill toward us, by which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm, our faith in him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called sacraments, that is say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel; being such as have partly grown out of the *corrupt* following of the apostles, and partly are states of life allowed in the Scripture, but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation; but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith (I Cor. 11:29).

Article XVII. – Of Baptism

Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church.

Article XVIII. – Of the Lord's Supper

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to

have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

Article XIX. – Of Both Kinds

The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people; for both the parts of the Lord's Supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike.

Article XX. – Of the One Oblation of Christ, finished upon the Cross

The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit.

Article XXI. – Of the Marriage of Ministers

The ministers of Christ are not recommended by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.

Article XXII. – Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches

It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have been always different, and may be changed according

to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the church to which he belongeth, which are not repugnant to the Word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly (that others may fear to do the like), as one that offendeth against the common order of the church, and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.

Article XXIII. – Of the Duty of Christian to the Civil Authority

It is the duty of all Christians, and especially of all Christian ministers, to observe and obey the laws and commands of the governing or supreme authority of the country of which they are citizens or subjects or in which they reside, and to use all laudable means to encourage and enjoin obedience to the powers that be.

Article XXIV. – Of Christian Men's Goods

The riches and goods of Christians, are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

Article XXV. – Of a Christian Man's Oath

As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James his apostle, so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgement, and truth.

Article XXVI. – Of Sanctification

Sanctification is that renewal of our fallen nature by the Holy Ghost, received through faith in Jesus Christ, whose blood of atonement cleanseth from all sin; whereby we are not only delivered from the guilt of sin, but are washed from its pollution, saved from its power, and are enabled, through grace, to love God with all our hearts and to walk in his holy commandments blameless.

¶71. THE GENERAL RULES OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

The Nature, Design and General Rules of Our United Societies

In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons who appeared to be deeply convicted of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption, came to Mr Wesley in London. They desired, as did two or three more the next day, that he would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together, which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on Thursday in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily), he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them, and they always concluded their meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities.

This was the rise of the **United Society,** first in Europe, and then in America. Such a society is no other than "a company of men having the *form* and seeking the *power* of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about 12 persons in a class, one of whom is styled the **leader**. It is his duty:

1. To see each person in his class once a week at least, in order:

a) to inquire how his soul prosper;

b) to advise, reprove, comfort or exhort, as occasion may require; and

c) to receive what he is willing to give toward the relief of the preachers, church and poor.

2. To meet the ministers and the stewards of the society once a week, in order:

a) to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly and will not be reproved; and

b) to pay the stewards what he has received of his class in the week preceding.

There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies – "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." But wherever this is really fixed in the soul it will be shown by its fruits.

It is therefore expected of all who continue therein that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Firstly: By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practised, such as:

The taking of the name of God in vain.

The profaning of the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein or by buying or selling.

Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.

Slaveholding; buying or selling slaves.

Fighting, quarrelling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using of many words in buying or selling.

The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.

The giving or taking of things on usury – that is, unlawful interest.

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates or ministers.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as:

The putting on of gold and costly apparel.

The taking of such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.

Softness and needless self-indulgence.

Laying up treasure upon earth.

Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

It is expected of all who continue in these societies that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation.

Secondly: By doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men:

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that "we are not to

do good unless our *hearts be free to it.*"

By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another; helping each other in business, and so much the more because the world will love its own and them only.

By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them *falsely*, for the Lord's sake.

It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly: By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are:

The public worship of God.

The ministry of the Word, either read or expounded.

The Supper of the Lord.

Family and private prayer.

Searching the scriptures.

Fasting or abstinence.

These are the General Rules of our societies; all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written Word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observes them not, who habitually breaks any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But, if then he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

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Part III

SOCIAL PRINCIPLES[55]

The Social Principles are a reminder of our Wesleyan concern for personal as well as social holiness. Affirming our desire for full salvation, which will lead us to avoid evil, do good and obey God, Methodists have sought to articulate what is good and right, and what is to be avoided in today's world.

Section I. Our Methodist Heritage

¶81. 1. Christian social responsibility is rooted in the teachings of the Bible and guided by Christian tradition. It is an integral part of the gospel which the Church is expected to proclaim, preserve and practise.

2. The Methodist Church has a special interest in social concerns because of its desire to be obedient to Christ in bringing the whole of life with its activities, possessions, relationships and environment into conformity with the will of God. Such obedience is exemplified in the life and labour of John Wesley who ministered to the physical, intellectual, spiritual and social needs of the people to whom he preached the gospel of salvation.

3. It is out of our gratitude for God's love and in affirmation of our belief in the inestimable worth of each person and the integrity of God's creation, that we renew our commitment to become faithful witnesses to the gospel and to live a life of personal and social holiness.

Section II. Our Methodist Theological Basis for Social Concerns

¶82. 1. We believe that God is the Creator of all people, regardless of race, creed, status or sex, and that each person is of infinite worth. We believe that all persons have supreme value in the sight of God and ought to be so regarded by us.

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[55] These Social Principles were revised by a task force appointed by the General Conference comprising Rev Dr Daniel K.S. Koh (convenor), Rev Benjamin Fong, Ps Nathanael Goh, Rev Dr Andrew Peh, Rev Anil Kumar Samuel and Rev Dr Edwin Tay. The Social Principles were adopted by the General Conference and incorporated into *The Book of Discipline* in 2022.

2. We believe that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof". Our own abilities and all we possess are gifts from God entrusted to us for responsible stewardship.

3. We believe that God in Christ is seeking to redeem all people and the world. We believe that the grace of God in Christ is available for redemption from personal and social sins as we seek to do His holy will in penitence and obedience.

4. Since Jesus died and was raised from the dead for the redemption of all people, we should live to help save humanity from sin and from every influence which would harm or destroy a person. All ideologies, institutions and practices will be tested by their effect upon persons.

5. The Methodist Church views the perplexing times and problems we face today in the light of the life and teaching of Jesus. Jesus teaches us to love God and our neighbours and to seek justice for all. To remain silent and passive in the face of poverty, discrimination, injustice and exploitation is to deny Christ.

Section III. Our Methodist Social Principles

¶83. The following Social Principles are formulated as a response of The Methodist Church in Singapore to human issues in the contemporary world. They are based on a biblical and theological foundation enriched by our Methodist tradition. The Social Principles call on all members of The Methodist Church in Singapore to a prayerful response of faith and practice.

THE SPHERE OF THE FAMILY

¶84. We affirm the importance and sanctity of the family. We believe that the healthy family unit forms a basic social environment in which responsible teachings can be imparted, moral values disseminated, and where love is shared and the worth of each person is affirmed. We deplore and reject values and morals which undermine the sanctity of family life.

1. *The Marital Relationship and Divorce.* a) We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant which is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment and fidelity between a man and a woman. We reject social norms that assume different standards for women and men in marriage.

b) The Church views with great concern the increasing number of divorces and affirms the need for adequate premarital and marital counselling as well as marriage

enrichment programmes. We also encourage an active and supportive commitment of the Church and our society to minister in love to the divorced and their families.

2. *Parent-Child Relationships.* a) We affirm the shared responsibility for parenting by men and women and encourage social, economic and religious efforts to enhance and strengthen relationships within families.

b) We recognise the burden of single-parent families and their need for understanding, care and support from the community and the Church.

c) We view with concern the diminishing time available for families to be together in our modern society. Families need to give priority to spending quality time together in worship and recreation for family life enrichment.

d) We believe that children have a duty to honour, respect and care for their parents especially in sickness and old age.

3. *God's Gift of Sex.* a) We recognise that human sexuality is a gift of God. Sexual intercourse is a sacred experience only when it is accompanied by the love and fidelity of a holy matrimony between a man and a woman. We believe that sexual intercourse outside the bonds of matrimony is contrary to the will of God.

b) We recognise that the issue of sexuality is divisive because it is also deeply personal to our identity. While not the only characteristic, sexuality is an important part of our humanity. However, the fallen human condition also includes sexual brokenness, the condition by which our perception of sex has distorted what God has intended sex to be.

c) We affirm that as Christians, the fundamental ground of our identity is found in Christ alone – regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, social status or sexuality.

d) We acknowledge that sexual brokenness, which afflicts all humanity, is manifested in several ways, including the exploitation of sex, addiction to pornography, same-sex attraction and gender dysphoria.

e) We deplore all forms of commercialisation and exploitation of sex with their consequent degradation of human personhood. We denounce the widespread distribution of pornographic and other sex-exploitative materials made easily accessible through social media.

f) We recognise that pornography is a growing problem which has also preyed upon young children. It degrades and distorts God's gift of sex, and debases our view of humans who are persons with dignity and not objects of sexual abuse and fantasy.

g) We affirm that persons suffering from sexual brokenness are of sacred worth to God and all believers are called by Jesus to a life of self-denial and discipleship.

h) We believe that persons who wrestle with sexual brokenness, such as same-sex attraction, gender dysphoria or addiction to pornography, need the healing and transforming power of God's grace and the welcoming hospitality of the Church. The Church should minister and guide such persons with faithfulness, courage and love, that out of their brokenness they may grow in holiness.

i) We consider homosexual acts to be incompatible with God's design for sex and incompatible with Christian teachings.

j) We affirm the integrity of single persons and reject all social practices and pressures that discriminate; and social attitudes that are prejudiced against persons who are not married.

4. *Birth Control and Abortion.* a) We believe that planned parenthood, practised with respect for human life, fulfils rather than violates the will of God. It is the duty of each married couple to prayerfully and responsibly seek parenthood or defer it in accordance with the best expression of Christian love.

b) We affirm that life begins at conception. We therefore do not subscribe to abortion except on medical grounds. We call on Christians to a searching and prayerful inquiry in situations in which abortion may be contemplated and to seek medical, pastoral and other appropriate counselling.

c) We call on churches to provide safe counselling spaces to guide and offer support for anyone who has had or may be contemplating abortion.

5. *Infertility and Assisted Methods of Reproduction.* a) We affirm that every child is a gift and not a right to be demanded from God. Procreation is always by the grace of God and not simply a product of modern science even when assisted methods of human reproduction are used.

b) We recognise that infertility may be a cause of suffering for some married couples. We accept the procedures of assisted human reproduction which can be regarded as methods to assist natural reproduction as long as the eggs or sperms of another person or surrogate mothers are not used.

c) Married couples who are burdened with the problem of infertility should prayerfully examine their motives for wanting a child and consider the medical, spiritual, moral and legal implications of assisted reproductive procedures.

d) Married couples who love children should consider sharing their love by adopting or fostering children into their families.

e) We denounce surrogacy as a means for persons to have a child or for sex selection. We believe that this is not God's divine plan for the family.

THE SPHERE OF ECONOMICS

¶85. We believe all economic systems are under the judgment of God and that we need to test each aspect of every economic system by the teachings of the Bible and to judge its practices and impact by its contribution towards the common good.

1. *Property and Possessions.* We believe that ownership of property is a trusteeship under God and all our possessions are a trust from God to be managed responsibly. It is contrary to our Christian faith for any person or group of persons to have exclusive and arbitrary control of any part of the created universe.

2. *The Acquisition of Wealth.* a) We support all honest measures that would reduce the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. We should ensure that materialistic progress does not undermine our family, weaken our community spirit, dehumanise the individual and destroy the natural environment.

b) We accept that wealth creation can enrich the nation, find jobs for the citizens and enhance the living standards of the population. Yet wealth creation must not be done by exploiting cheap labour, using unsustainable natural resources, widening the income gap between the rich and the poor, or promoting a selfish profligate lifestyle.

3. *A Simple Lifestyle and Consumerism.* a) We call on all Christians to adopt a simple lifestyle and to be ever conscious and vigilant against the influence of consumerism which thrives on pride, greed and the human propensity to acquire more than we need.

b) We need to evaluate our personal and business practices so that we will not be influenced and controlled by the standards and values of an acquisitive society and an extravagant and wasteful lifestyle.

c) A simple lifestyle is not a call for an ascetic life. It is a spiritual discipline which promotes godliness with contentment, and increases our awareness of God's presence and providence in our lives. A simple lifestyle frees us to be more sensitive to the needs of the poor and the beauty of God's world.

THE SPHERE OF POLITICS

¶86. The Christian point of view demands that concentrations of power in government, industry, business and religious organisations be used responsibly for the well-being of the community. Power that is godly must be enabling and liberative and should not be confused with abusive and coercive force.

1. *Political Responsibilities.* a) We believe that all governments are under the sovereignty of God.

b) "Separation of Church and State" means no organic union of the two but does permit reciprocal constructive interaction. The Church should continually exert a strong moral influence upon the State, by supporting policies and programmes which are just and compassionate and opposing policies and programmes which are not.

c) We believe that consensus building promotes social peace and order. It helps to provide an environment for healthy exchanges of ideas in a fair and transparent manner. However, decision making by consensus is fair and effective only if the people have sufficient and safe channels opened for them to participate in meaningful and honest discussions, without fear of reprisal.

d) We will pray for all those in authority in public service and support their efforts to secure justice, benefits and equal opportunities for the well-being of the society.

2. *The Christian and Military Service.* a) We believe that, in general, war goes against the teachings and example of Christ and that the influence of the Church should be on the side of every effort seeking to remove the seeds of war. In the event of widespread threats to peace and justice, war may be supported as a last resort and following the guidelines of the Just War Tradition.

b) The Methodist Church teaches respect for civil authority that is properly constituted. It encourages both love of country and of all people. It believes that the security and defence of the country is the responsibility of every able-bodied citizen.

3. *Building a World Community.* a) We stand for the promotion of international goodwill, peace and understanding among all nations. We believe that international cooperation based on mutual respect will foster peace and build consensus for a better world order.

b) We call for stronger action to be taken against human and drug trafficking around the world. We denounce sex tourism which often exploits vulnerable and poor women and children.

c) We support fair trade among nations, and not just free trade which sometimes penalises the poor for the benefit and pleasure of the rich.

d) We are appalled by refugee problems and sufferings caused by prolonged wars, racial and religious conflicts, political turmoil and persecution. While such entrenched problems cannot be easily resolved because of the complexities of global

politics, the United Nations and richer countries in the world should provide leadership in offering safe havens for the refugees and support for them to be resettled.

e) We affirm our historic concern for the world which belongs to God and strive for all persons and peoples to enjoy full and equal membership in a truly world community.

THE SPHERE OF COMMUNITY LIFE

¶87. We recognise that Singapore is a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious society and we believe that everyone is of equal worth in God's sight regardless of our creed, race, sex, age or social status. We seek to work towards societies in which each person's unique value is recognised, affirmed and strengthened.

1. *Multi-Religious Understanding.* a) We believe that it is necessary and healthy to engage in open and honest dialogue with persons of other faiths in a spirit of love, mutual respect and sensitivity.

b) We affirm the right of religious groups to exercise their faith without undue legal, political or financial impediments.

c) We believe that legitimate religious groups have the right to share their faith openly and honestly without misrepresenting or denigrating the faiths of others.

2. *Multi-Racial Harmony.* a) We believe that a key foundation of racial harmony is love, mutual respect and acceptance of our neighbours regardless of their race and religious beliefs.

b) Racism inhibits and cripples our growth in Christ as it is antithetical to the gospel itself. Racial pride and prejudice left unchecked is a potential source of inter-racial strife and conflict.

c) We rejoice in the gifts which each ethnic history and culture brings to our total life. We further assert the rights of members of racial and ethnic minorities to equal opportunities in employment and promotion; in education and training; in voting; in public housing; in different avenues of leadership; and in all aspects of community life.

3. *Rights of Women.* We affirm women and men to be equal in every aspect of their common life. Women should therefore be given equal treatment in employment, promotion, compensation and citizenship privileges.

We recognise the importance of women in decision-making positions at all levels

of life.

4. *Rights of the Aged.* We support social policies that integrate the aging into the life of the total community, including sufficient incomes, increased and non-discriminatory employment opportunities beyond retirement, educational and service opportunities, and adequate medical care and housing.

5. *Rights of Children.* We recognise that parents and society in general have special obligations to children. Children should not be deprived of education, food, shelter, clothing and health care. Furthermore, they must be protected from economic and sexual exploitation.

6. *Rights of the Disabled.* We affirm the responsibility of the church and society to minister to the needs of persons with mental, physical and/or psychological disabilities. We urge the church and society to help disabled persons to enable them to be full participants in the community of faith and the society at large. They should be given adequate access to public amenities, transport, job opportunities and social gatherings.

7. *Rights and Social Responsibilities.* a) It is important to make a distinction between a selfish and self-centred attitude to life and a healthy self-respect and self-love.

b) It is when we have a healthy self-affirmative love that we are able to love our neighbours as ourselves.

c) We believe that it is only when we recognise and fulfil our social responsibilities and obligations that our basic human rights will be respected. The affirmation of basic human rights and social responsibilities is based on who we are as persons made in the image of God.

8. *The Pursuit of Excellence.* a) We believe that excellence should not be pursued only in academic achievements, economic prosperity or productivity. We need also to strive for excellence in artistic, creative and spiritual endeavours, and more importantly in the cultivation of Christian virtues.

b) We believe that a lifestyle grounded on spiritual values and Christian virtues is our best defence against a blind utilitarian, selfish and materialistic approach to life.

THE SPHERE OF THE INTERNET, SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGIES

¶88. The internet is an ubiquitous presence in modern life. It is experienced both as a communications network and more so as an environment which surrounds

us; a sphere which we inhabit. We affirm the gifts of the internet and other technologies, and how they can support Christian faith and practice. However, we remain cautious about how the internet, sciences and technologies can be harnessed in ways inimical to Christian morality.

1. *The Mitigated Good of the Internet.* a) We believe that the internet has served as a powerful tool for education, commercial activity, intercultural dialogue, political participation and mutual understanding. It can also serve the cause of Christianity.

b) We support the right development and responsible use of the internet, for the sake of humanity. These include, but are not limited to, fostering justice, peace and the common good; the building of all levels of civil society; the development of solidarity with our fellow humans nationally and internationally.

c) We believe that relationships formed through online engagement are not always superficial or fleeting and can in fact be life-giving expressions of mutual love. We do not, however, believe that these can adequately replace offline communities and direct interaction with people.

2. *The Challenges of the Internet.* a) We caution against an overzealous and uncritical adoption of digital and internet technologies that fails to discern possible deleterious effects, such as those of an anti-authoritarian and anti-religious tenor, or the rampant emphasis on individual liberty held in opposition to or at the expense of wider societal well-being.

b) We note the ways in which the internet has made some forms of antisocial behaviour and evil easier, such as access to pornography; the nefarious use of it by paedophiles, traffickers, hate groups and terrorists; plagiarism and theft of intellectual property; issues relating to security, privacy and anonymity; falsehoods, rumours and character assassinations. We do not see the internet as the source of these societal evils. We only acknowledge that these dangers are exacerbated by technical features of the internet.

3. *Christians in the Internet Age.* a) We therefore call on Christians to inhabit the sphere of the internet as they would the physical – not by sectarianism or isolationism, but by patient and faithful public witness to the gospel. The internet landscape is no less a sphere in which we must be faithful to our Lord.

b) The fast-developing technology and saturation of the internet in everyday life requires a robust Christian faith and practice in response to new moral

conundrums and circumstances. We urge all Christians to engage the unique challenges of the internet by bringing to this realm a distinctive Christian moral vision and practice. The task of Christians is to adopt a critical mind and learn to pay attention to the benefits and costs the internet will bring, and to point the way to a faithful inhabitation of the internet in the life of the children of God.

4. *The Use of Other Technologies.* We affirm that all technology is a gift from God and may contribute to the well-being of all people and societies. However, we believe scientific and technological knowledge must be applied with spiritual wisdom if technology is not to be abused or to become a burden to society.

a) In an ever-changing world of information technologies, bio-medical sciences and artificial intelligence, the application of such scientific advances should be welcomed if they enhance the quality of life for the whole community, and not just for a privileged group of people.

b) Advances in sciences must not be allowed to divide the community, devalue human dignity and identity as persons created and loved by God.

THE SPHERE OF SOCIAL WELL-BEING

¶89. We affirm that it is a desirable Christian virtue for a person to place the overall interest and welfare of the community before the interest of the self. Each person has been endowed with gifts and graces which can contribute to the development of a compassionate society.

1. *Caring for the Poor.* a) We believe that meeting human needs is both a private and public responsibility. We need to be conscious of the plights of the poor and powerless in our society and the world.

b) We believe that it is our Christian duty to provide opportunities for education and training for the poor to upgrade and be gainfully employed.

c) We have to practise love with action, reaching out to and supporting works and social policies which will alleviate and overcome the systemic problems and obstacles faced by the poor and vulnerable people in our society.

2. *The Promotion of Workers' Welfare.* a) We stand for reasonable hours of work, for fair wages and for just and proper working conditions. All workers, including migrant workers, should be given time for leisure and recreation. Employees and employers alike have the right to organise for collective bargaining and well-being.

b) We fully support public and private programmes of economic security for

old age and adequate insurance coverage for sickness and injury.

c) We believe in the dignity of labour and that unemployment tends to destroy human self-respect. We regard our vocations as spheres of service to God.

d) Domestic helpers and migrant workers are also persons of infinite worth, loved by God and they must not be treated as disposable cheap labourers. They should be given fair wages, provided with proper hygienic housing, offered satisfactory medical and life insurance coverage, and adequate protection from being exploited by unscrupulous employers and agents.

e) We urge Christian employers of domestic helpers and migrant workers to regard such employment as an opportunity for ministry to those from less developed countries. Our care for them and how well we treat them is part of our Christian witness.

3. *The Provision of Health Care.* a) We affirm that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit and that it is our Christian responsibility to adopt healthy lifestyles. We also believe that affordable basic health care for physical and mental illnesses must be available to all.

b) We recognise overeating, alcoholism, drug abuse and smoking as major factors which contribute to illness and premature deaths. We discourage overeating and the consumption of alcohol and tobacco and fully support all educational programmes to change these unhealthy lifestyles. We believe that the Church is called to be a healing and redemptive fellowship for those struggling with these problems.

c) We affirm God's sovereignty in healing and the need for medical resources to be used with common sense and compassion. Medical treatments are God's gifts to humankind for healing and restoration of health.

d) We affirm the maintenance of stringent controls in testing new technologies and drugs. Humans must not be used as first-line experimental test subjects for bio-medical research. Research and drugs should only be applied for general use after rigorous testing by the researchers, and clearance from an appropriate ethics committee or a recognised institutional review board.

4. *Caring for the Dying and Euthanasia.* a) We believe that God is always seeking to alleviate human suffering and we are called to be the channels of His grace and love to those who are dying.

b) The time between the diagnosis of terminal illness and the event of death can be transformed into a time of blessing and an opportunity for emotional and spiritual growth through the loving concern of those providing hospice care.

c) We do not subscribe to euthanasia for those who are terminally ill as euthanasia fails to recognise the spiritual dimension of life and it goes against the Christian teaching on the sanctity of life. We fully endorse hospice care as the more humane alternative to euthanasia.

5. *Ministry to Drug Addicts.* We support regulations that protect society from the abuse of drugs. The drug-dependent person is an individual of infinite worth in need of treatment and rehabilitation. Drug abuse should be viewed as a symptom of wider disorders for which remedies should be sought.

6. *Ministry to Prisoners.* a) In the love of Christ who came to save those who are lost, we need to minister to those in prisons and their families. We should also promote systems of rehabilitation that will restore, preserve and nurture the humanity of the imprisoned.

b) We support legislations and social policies to reduce and eliminate crime.

c) Capital punishment is a blunt instrument which must be exercised with utmost care. It should be used rarely and only after open and fair trial and following the due process of the law. A Christian approach to criminal law must be marked by both justice and mercy.

7. *Gambling.* a) Gambling is an expression of one's desire to instant wealth. It is a form of bondage and a social sickness motivated by greed and covetousness. It is also a menace to society as it compromises the best interests of moral, social, economic and spiritual life of the community.

b) We do not subscribe to any form of gambling.

THE SPHERE OF CREATION CARE

¶90. All creation is the Lord's and we are called to be responsible stewards of water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life and outer space. We believe the Church has the responsibility and power to inculcate higher moral and spiritual values which are necessary to address the problems raised by the environmental crisis, the abuses of technological advances and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

1. *Conservation of Natural Resources.* a) We support and encourage policies aimed at conservation of our natural resources, the prevention of pollution of our air, water and soil, the protection of wildlife and the humane treatment of animals.

b) We call for a cessation to wanton destruction of natural forest which upsets biodiversity and the complex ecosystem of the world.

c) We should seek to use natural resources responsibly, avoiding unsustainable and wasteful lifestyles and value systems at home, in church and in our society.

d) We speak against illegal trading of wildlife, including plants and fish, birds and animals.

THE SPHERE OF THE CHURCH

¶91. Underlining our response to the challenges of our time and how we ought to bring our faith to bear on such challenges must be our understanding of our calling and identity as Christians and faithful members of the Church. The Church is a community of believers who are loved by God, informed and shaped by the gospel of Jesus Christ and sanctified by the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. It is a community where Christians are taught by scripture, instructed by tradition, enriched by reason and affirmed by the corporate experience of the followers of Christ. The moral vision of the community which informs our social principles must be guided by virtues which every Christian should cultivate. The Church, to be faithful to its calling and identity, must teach and nourish its members to help us be the Church which God has intended for us to be. It is from our understanding of who we are as members of the Church and the virtues that form our character and undergird our ethics that we can be responsible and responsive in applying our faith to the vexatious issues of our time.

1. *The Church and Christian Virtues.* a) We commend Christians to cultivate and practise the virtues of the Christian faith, so that, by the Holy Spirit, we may acquire these virtues and manifest them in the way we think and the way we live our life, wherever God may place us.

b) Even where immediate answers to specific questions arising from a rapidly developing world are not possible, we can still show faith, hope and love; together with the development of the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude as the sure and steady guides for Christian character formation and practice.

c) These virtues of the Christian life are trustworthy and truthful, providing the anchor for the Church's moral vision and practice even if vices should take hold of the wider cultural imagination.

2. *The Church and the Great Commandment.* a) It is an unambiguous teaching of Jesus Christ that the Great Commandment calls us to love the Lord our God with our heart, soul, mind and strength; and to love our neighbour as ourselves. A true

mark of a Christian and the Church must be the clear evidence of our commitment to obey and to live out the Great Commandment which should energise us for faithful Christian witness in word and action, being and behaviour.

b) Loving God with our whole self requires total commitment to God. It means letting God be at the centre of our life as much as He should be at the centre of our Church. It means that we should refuse to follow the teachings of the world which compromise our love for God and His Kingdom. Our priority must be to seek first God's Kingdom and His righteousness, and not the shallow, spurious and self-serving teachings of the gods of this world.

Section IV. Our Methodist Social Creed

¶92. 1. We believe in God, Creator of the world, and in Jesus Christ the Redeemer of creation. We believe in the Holy Spirit, through whom we acknowledge God's gifts, and we repent of our sin in misusing these gifts for selfish pleasure and gain.

2. We affirm the natural world as God's handiwork and dedicate ourselves as responsible stewards to its care, preservation, enhancement and faithful use by humankind.

3. We joyfully receive for ourselves and others, the blessings of community, sexuality, marriage and the family.

4. We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youth, young adults, the aging, the dying and those with handicaps; to improvement in the quality of life, and to the rights and dignity of racial, ethnic and religious minorities.

5. We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the good of themselves and others; in the rights of property as a trust from God, collective bargaining and the cultivation of a simple lifestyle; and in the elimination of economic and social distress and injustices.

6. We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world, to freedom for all people, and to the rule of justice and law among nations.

7. We believe in the present and final triumph of God in human affairs, and affirm that the Earth belongs to God and the fullness thereof.

8. We commit ourselves to live a responsible life informed by the teachings of the Bible and nurtured by the instructions of the Church that will glorify God in our thoughts, words and deeds. In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Part IV

ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Chapter One
THE LOCAL CHURCH

Section I. The Local Church and Conference

¶101. A local church is a community of all true believers under the Lordship of Christ. It is the redemptive fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by persons divinely called and the Sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit, the Church exists for the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers and the redemption of the world.

¶102. The Church of Jesus Christ exists in and for the world. It is primarily at the level of the local church that the Church encounters the world located in nearly every community. The local church is a strategic base from which Christians move out to the structures of society. The function of the local church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is to help people to personally know Jesus Christ and to live their daily lives in light of their relationship with God. Therefore, the local church is to minister to persons in the community where the local church is located, to provide appropriate training and nurture to all, to cooperate in ministry with other local churches, to defend God's creation and live as an ecologically responsible community, and to participate in the worldwide mission of the Church, as minimal expectations of an authentic church.

¶103. The local church is a connectional society of persons who have professed their faith in Christ, have been baptised, have

assumed the vows of membership in The Methodist Church in Singapore, and are associated in fellowship as a local Methodist Church in order that they may hear the Word of God, receive the Sacraments, praise and worship the triune God, and carry forward the work which Christ has committed to His Church. Such a society of believers, being within The Methodist Church in Singapore and subject to its discipline, is also an inherent part of the Church Universal, which is composed of all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and which in the Apostles' Creed we declare to be the holy catholic church. *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

¶104. Each local church shall have a definite evangelistic, nurture and witness responsibility. It shall be responsible for its present members and for persons who choose it as their church.

¶105. 1. A **local conference** shall consist of one or more churches which are organised under, and subject to, the discipline of The Methodist Church in Singapore, and to which one or more ministers shall be duly appointed (with one minister as pastor-in-charge). *Am. 2012* *ed. 2020*

2. A local conference of two or more churches is a circuit. *ed. 2017*

Section II. Church Membership

¶106. All persons, without regard to race, national origin or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, to participate in its programmes, and when they take the appropriate vows, to be admitted into the membership of any local church in the connection.

¶107. The membership of a local Methodist church shall include all baptised persons who have come into membership by profession of faith, or by transfer from another church, and whose names have not been removed by death, transfer, withdrawal or removal for cause (¶132, ¶134, ¶¶137–143).

¶108. A member of any local Methodist church is a member of the total Methodist connection.

THE MEANING OF MEMBERSHIP

¶109. When persons unite with a local Methodist church, they profess their faith in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; in Jesus Christ, His only Son; and in the Holy Spirit. Thus, they make known their desire to live their daily lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. They covenant together with God and with the members of the local church to keep the vows which are part of the order of confirmation and reception into the Church: *ed. 2013*

1. To confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and pledge their allegiance to his kingdom.

2. To receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

3. To promise according to the grace given them to live a Christian life and always remain faithful members of Christ's holy Church.

4. To be loyal to The Methodist Church in Singapore and uphold it by their prayers, their presence, their gifts and their service. *ed. 2020*

¶110. Faithful membership in the local church is essential for personal growth and for developing an increasing sensitivity to the will and grace of God. As members involve themselves in private and public prayer, worship, the Sacraments, study, Christian action, systematic giving and holy discipline, they grow in their appreciation of Christ, understanding of God at work in history and the natural order, and an understanding of themselves.

¶111. Faithful discipleship includes the obligation to participate in the corporate life of the congregation with fellow members of the Body of Christ. A member is bound in sacred covenant to shoulder the burdens, share the risks and celebrate the joys of fellow members. A Christian is called to speak the truth in love, always ready to confront conflict in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

¶112. A member of The Methodist Church in Singapore is to be a servant of Christ on mission in the local and worldwide

community. The servanthood is performed in family life, daily work, recreation and social activities, responsible citizenship, the stewardship of property and accumulated resources, the issues of corporate life and all attitudes towards other persons. Participation in disciplined groups is an expected part of personal mission involvement. Each member is called upon to be a witness for Christ in the world, a light and leaven in society, and a reconciler in a culture of conflict. Each member is to identify with the agony and suffering of the world and to radiate and exemplify the Christ. The standards of attitude and conduct set forth in the Social Principles shall be considered as an essential resource for guiding each member of the Church in being a servant of Christ on mission.

¶113. All members of the church should study the principles of Christian stewardship and dedicate themselves, their time, talents and substance to God and the advancement of His kingdom. In recognition of God's ownership they should practise systematic and proportionate giving (Mal. 3:8–12; I Cor. 16:2). They should regard Christian liberality as a privilege and sacred duty, and freely give of their substance for the spread of the gospel at home and abroad, for the maintenance of the local church and for the support of the agencies and enterprises of the general church.

¶114. All members are to be held accountable for their faithfulness to their covenant and vows with God and the other members of the church. Should any member be accused of violating the covenant and failing to keep the vows which the member entered into with God and the other members of the local church as stated in ¶109, it shall be the responsibility of the local church and the pastor to minister to that person in compliance with the provisions of ¶¶130–132 in an effort to enable the member to faithfully perform the vows and covenant of membership.

¶115. Dissension in the church, both in spirit and in practice, should be avoided. Members should ever be diligent to maintain the unity of the church, local and general. They should not speak disparagingly of one another, but pray earnestly for and in honour prefer one another and together labour "to maintain the unity of the

Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

¶116. The foregoing rules as taught in the Holy Scriptures and enjoined upon believers are herein set forth for the guidance of the members of the Church and for the proper regulation of the Church. Should any members violate or habitually neglect these rules, those who have been appointed to watch over them shall admonish them in love, but if after repeated and prayerful admonition they do not reform, they shall be dealt with as those disobedient to the Order and Discipline of the Church.

ADMISSION INTO THE CHURCH

¶117. All persons seeking to be saved from their sins and sincerely desiring to be Christian in faith and practice are proper candidates for membership in The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020* When such persons offer themselves for membership, it shall be the duty of the pastor, or of proper persons appointed by the pastor, to instruct them in the meaning of the Christian faith and the history, organisation and teaching of The Methodist Church in Singapore, *ed. 2020* using materials approved by The Methodist Church in Singapore to *ed. 2020* explain to them the baptismal and membership vows; and to lead them to commit themselves to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. When they shall have professed their faith in Christ and have made known their desire to live their lives as disciples of Jesus Christ and agreed to assume the obligations of being faithful members of The Methodist Church in Singapore, after a reasonable period of *ed. 2020* training, and after the Sacrament of Baptism has been administered to those who have not been previously baptised, the pastor shall bring them before the congregation, administer the vows, receive them into the fellowship of the Church, and duly enrol them into full membership.

¶118. A duly authorised minister of The Methodist Church in *ed. 2020* Singapore while serving as chaplain of any organisation, institution or military unit, or as a campus pastor, or while otherwise present where a local church is not available, may receive a person into the

membership of The Methodist Church in Singapore when such person shall have professed faith in Christ and expressed a desire to live daily as a disciple of Jesus Christ and agreed to assume the obligations of being a faithful member of the Church. Before the vows of membership have been administered, such appointed minister shall consult with the pastor of the local church of the choice of the person concerned, and upon agreement by the pastor, a statement of the vows of membership shall be issued and the pastor thereof on receiving such statement shall duly enrol that person as a member. *ed. 2020*

¶119. Any candidate for church membership who for good reason is unable to appear before the congregation may, at the discretion of the pastor, be received elsewhere in accordance with the Ritual of The Methodist Church in Singapore. Names of such persons shall be placed on the church roll and announcement of their reception shall be made to the congregation. *ed. 2020*

¶120. A member in good standing in any Christian denomination who has been baptised and who desires to unite with The Methodist Church in Singapore may be received into membership by a certificate of transfer from that person's former church, or by a declaration of Christian faith, and upon affirming willingness to be loyal to The Methodist Church in Singapore. The pastor will report to the sending church the date of reception of such a member. It is recommended that instruction in the faith and work of the Church be provided for all such persons. Persons received from churches which do not issue certificates of transfer or letters of recommendation shall be listed as "Received from other denominations". *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

CHILDREN

¶121. Because the redeeming love of God, revealed in Jesus Christ extends to all persons, and because Jesus explicitly included the children in His kingdom, the pastor(s) of each church shall earnestly exhort all Christian parents or guardians to present their children to the Lord in Baptism at an early age. Before Baptism is

administered, the pastor(s) shall diligently instruct the parents or guardians regarding the meanings of this Sacrament and the vows which they assume. It is expected of parents or guardians who present their children for Baptism that they shall use all diligence in bringing them up in conformity to the Word of God and in the fellowship of the Church. It is required that one or both parents or guardians shall be members of a Christian church or that sponsors who are members shall assume the baptismal vows. They shall be admonished of this obligation and earnestly exhorted to faithfulness therein. At the time of Baptism they shall be informed that the church with its church school programme will aid them in the Christian nurture of their children.

¶122. The pastor(s) of the church shall, at the time of administering the Sacrament of Baptism, furnish the parents or guardians of the child who is baptised with a Certificate of Baptism, which shall also clearly state that the child is now enrolled as a preparatory member in The Methodist Church in Singapore. The pastor(s) shall also admonish members of the congregation of their responsibility for the Christian nurture of the child. The pastor(s) shall be responsible for seeing that the full name of the baptised child is added to the preparatory membership roll of the church. *ed. 2020*

¶123. The pastor(s) shall keep and transmit to the succeeding pastor(s) an accurate register of the names of all baptised children in the charge, including both those who have been baptised there and those who have been baptised elsewhere. This register of baptised children along with a list of other preparatory members shall constitute the preparatory membership roll of the church. It shall give the full name of the child, the date of birth, the date and place of Baptism, and the names of the parents or guardians and their place of residence.

¶124. All baptised children under the care of a Methodist church shall be retained as preparatory members in the church until this status is terminated by: confirmation and reception into full membership, after a proper course of training, both in the church school and in the pastor's class; transfer with their families to

another Methodist church; transfer with their families to a church of another Christian denomination; death; withdrawal; or transfer to the constituency roll of the church at the age of 16. The preparatory membership roll shall be corrected each year by adding and subtracting the names received and removed during the year.

¶125. It shall be the duty of the pastor(s), the parents or guardians, and the officers and teachers of the church school, and all members of the congregation to provide training for the children of the church throughout their childhood that will lead to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to an understanding of the Christian faith, an appreciation of the privileges and obligations of church membership, and the pastor(s) shall, at least annually, building on the preparation which boys and girls have received throughout their childhood, organise into classes for confirmation the youth who are 16 years and above, using materials produced by The Methodist Church in Singapore. Whenever boys *ed. 2020*
and girls so prepared in a course of study approved by The Methodist Church in Singapore shall give evidence of their own *ed. 2020*
Christian faith and purpose and understanding of the privileges and obligations of church membership, they may be confirmed and *Am. 2016*
received into full membership in the church.

YOUTH

¶126. It is strongly recommended that each local church offer for youth who are full members of the Church an advanced class of instruction in the meaning of the Christian life and church membership. It is further recommended that this course taught by the pastor(s) emphasises the doctrines of The Methodist Church in *ed. 2020*
Singapore and the nature and mission of the Church, leading to continued growth in the knowledge, grace and service of our Lord Jesus Christ.

AFFILIATE AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP *Am. 2016*

¶127. A member of The Methodist Church from another country residing for an extended period in Singapore may on request be enrolled as an **affiliate member** of a Methodist church located in the vicinity of the temporary residence. The home pastor(s) shall be notified of the affiliate membership. Such membership shall entitle the person to the fellowship of that church, to its pastoral care and oversight, and to participation in its activities, but an affiliate member shall not be eligible to hold any position of church leadership as elaborated in ¶¶149–150 in the local church and that person shall be counted and reported only as a member of the home church. *Am. 2016*

¶128. A member in good standing of another denomination from another country may on request be enrolled as an **associate member** of a Methodist church located in the vicinity of the temporary residence. Such membership shall entitle the person to the fellowship of that church, to its pastoral care and oversight, and to participation in its activities, but an associate member shall not be eligible to hold any position of church leadership as elaborated in ¶¶149–150 in the local church.

¶129. This relationship may be terminated at the discretion of the Local Conference in which the affiliate or associate membership is held whenever the affiliate or associate member shall move from the vicinity of the Methodist church in which the affiliate or associate membership is held.

CARE OF CHURCH MEMBERS

¶130. The local church shall endeavour to enlist each member in activities for spiritual growth and in participation in the services and ministries of the Church and its organisations. It shall be the duty of the pastor(s) and of the members of the Local Church Executive Committee by regular visitation, care and spiritual oversight, to provide necessary activities and opportunities for spiritual growth through individual and family worship, and

individual and group study to connect faith and daily living, and continually to aid the members to keep their vows to uphold the Church by attendance, prayers, gifts and service. The Church has a moral and spiritual obligation to nurture its non-participating and indifferent members and to lead them into a full and active church relationship.

¶131. The pastor(s) in cooperation with the Local Church Executive Committee may arrange the membership in groups – with a leader for each group – designed to involve the membership of the church in its ministry to the community. These groups shall be of such size, usually not larger than eight or ten families, as to be convenient and effective for service. Such groups may be especially helpful in evangelistic outreach by contacting newcomers and unreached persons, by visitation, by responding to personal and family crises, by holding prayer meetings in the homes, by distributing Christian literature and by other means. Non-resident members should constitute a special group to be served by correspondence. The groups may be formed and the leaders appointed by the Local Church Executive Committee upon recommendation of the pastor(s).

¶132. While the primary responsibility and initiative rest with each individual member faithfully to perform the vows of membership which have been solemnly assumed, if the member should be neglectful of that responsibility, these procedures shall be followed:

1. If a member residing in the community is negligent of the vows or is regularly absent from the worship of the church, the pastor(s) shall report that member's name to the Local Church Executive Committee which shall do all in its power to re-enlist the member in the active fellowship of the church. It shall visit the member and make clear that while the member's name is on the roll of a particular local church, one is a member of The Methodist Church in Singapore as a whole, and that since the member is not attending the church where enrolled, the member is requested to do one of four things: *ed. 2020*

a) renew the vows and become a regular worshipper in the church where the member's name is recorded;

b) request transfer to another Methodist church where the member will be a regular worshipper;

c) arrange transfer to a particular church of another denomination; or

d) request withdrawal.

If the member does not comply with any of the available alternatives over a period of two years, the member's name may be removed. *Am. 2004*

2. If a member whose address is known is residing outside the community and is not participating in the worship or activity of the church, the directives to encourage a transfer of membership shall be followed each year until that member joins another church or requests in writing that the name be removed from the membership roll; *provided*, however, that if after two years the committee has not been able to relate that member to the church at the new place of residence, the name may be removed by the procedure of ¶132.4 below. *Am. 2004*

3. If the address of a member is no longer known to the pastor(s), the Witness and Evangelism Committee shall make every effort to locate the member, including listing the name in the church bulletin and circularising it throughout the parish. If the member can be located, the directives of either ¶¶132.1 or 132.2 above shall be followed; but if after two years of such efforts the address is still unknown, the member's name may be removed from the membership roll by the procedure of ¶132.4 below. *Am. 2004*

4. If the directives in ¶¶132.1, 132.2 or 132.3 above have been followed for the specified number of years without success, the member's name may be removed from the membership roll by vote of the Local Conference on recommendation of the pastor(s) and the chairperson of the Witness and Evangelism Committee, each name being considered individually *provided* that the member's name shall have been entered in the minutes of the Local Conference for two consecutive years preceding removal. On the *Am. 2004*

roll there shall be entered after the name: "Removed by order of the Local Conference"; and if the action is on the basis of ¶132.3, there shall be added: "Reason: 'Address Unknown'". The membership of the person concerned shall thereby be terminated, and the record thereof shall be retained *provided* that upon request the member may be restored to membership by recommendation of the pastor(s); and *provided* further, that should a transfer of membership be requested, the pastor(s) may restore the person's membership for this purpose and issue the certificate of transfer.

5. Recognising that the church has a continuing moral and spiritual obligation to nurture all persons, even those whose names have been removed from the membership roll, it is recommended that the names thus removed shall be maintained. It shall then become the responsibility of the Local Church Executive Committee to provide for the review of this roll at least once a year. After the review has been made, it is recommended that the pastor(s) and/or the Witness and Evangelism Committee contact those whose names appear on this roll, either in person or by other means, in the most effective and practical manner. The names and addresses of those who have moved outside the local church's area should be sent to local churches in their new communities, that those churches may visit and minister to them.

¶133. If a local church is discontinued, the district superintendent shall select another Methodist church and transfer its members thereto, or to such other churches as the members may select.

MEMBERSHIP RECORDS AND REPORTS

¶134. Each local church shall accurately maintain the following membership rolls:

1. **Full Membership Roll**.
2. **Preparatory Membership Roll**, containing the names and pertinent information of baptised children and youth of the church 16 years of age and under who are not full members.
3. **Members Removed by Local Conference Action**.

4. **Constituency Roll**, containing the names and addresses of such persons as are not members of the church concerned, including unbaptised children, church school members not yet members of the church, preparatory members who have reached the age of 16 and who have not been received into full membership, and other non-members for whom the local church has pastoral responsibility.
5. **Affiliate Membership Roll**.
6. **Associate Membership Roll**.

¶135. The pastor(s) shall report to each Local Conference the names of persons received into the membership of the church or churches since the Local Conference preceding, and the names of persons whose membership in the church or churches has been terminated during the same period, indicating how each case was received or how the membership was terminated.

¶136. The basic membership records in each local church shall consist of a permanent church register which may be a bound volume and a card index, a loose-leaf book, kept in a membership record or an electronic information system. *Am. 2008*

Where the **permanent church register** is kept in written form, it may be a volume of durable material. The names shall be recorded chronologically as each person is received into the fellowship of that church, and without reference to alphabetical order. The names shall be numbered in regular numerical order, and the number of each shall appear on the corresponding card, page or record in the card index, loose-leaf book, membership record or electronic information system. Similar information shall be recorded where the permanent church register is kept in electronic or other forms.

TRANSFER AND TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

¶137. Membership in a local church may be terminated by death, transfer, withdrawal, expulsion, action of the Local Conference or pursuant to disciplinary proceedings under *The Book of Discipline*. It shall be the duty of the pastor(s) of the charge to *Am. 2012 ed. 2006*

keep an accurate record of all terminations of membership and to report to each Local Conference the names of all persons whose membership has been terminated since the conference preceding, in each instance indicating the reason for such terminations.

¶138. If a member of a Methodist church shall move to another community, so far removed from the home church that the member cannot participate regularly in its worship and activity, the member shall be encouraged to transfer membership to a Methodist church in the community of the newly established residence. As soon as the pastor(s) is reliably informed of this change of residence, actual or contemplated, it shall be the pastor's duty and obligation to assist the member to become established in the fellowship of a church in the community of the future home, and to send to a Methodist pastor in such community, or to the district superintendent, or (if neither is known) to the Board of Witness and Evangelism, a letter of notification, giving the latest known address of the person or persons concerned and requesting local pastoral care. The above procedure is based on the recognition that absentee membership is not good for the individual or the church, and that it is essential that we recognise that the care of souls and building up of the whole church is more important than retaining membership in a particular congregation, whether for sentiment or other reasons.

¶139. When a pastor(s) discovers a member of The Methodist Church in Singapore residing in the community whose membership is in a church so far removed from the place of residence that the member cannot participate regularly in its worship and activity, it shall be the duty of the pastor(s) to give pastoral oversight to such person and to encourage transfer of membership to a Methodist church in the community where the member resides. *ed. 2020*

¶140. 1. When a pastor(s) receives a request for a transfer of membership from the pastor of another Methodist church or from the person concerned, that pastor shall send the proper certificate of transfer directly to the pastor of the Methodist church to which the member is transferring, or where there is no pastor, to the district superintendent.

2. The pastor or district superintendent who receives such a certificate of transfer shall enrol the name of the person so transferring after public reception in a regular service or worship, or if circumstances demand, public announcement in such a service. The pastor of the church issuing the certificate shall then be notified, whereupon the said pastor shall remove the member from the roll.

3. Certificates of transfer shall be accompanied by two official forms. A "Notice of Transfer of Membership" is to be sent to the member by the pastor who transfers the membership. An "Acknowledgement of Transfer of Membership" is to be sent to the former pastor by the pastor who receives the transferred member.

¶141. A pastor upon receiving a request from a member to transfer to a church of another denomination, or upon receiving such request from a pastor or duly authorised official of another denomination, shall (with approval of the member) issue a certificate of transfer and shall properly record the transfer of such person on the membership roll of the local church; and the membership shall thereby be terminated. For the transfer of a member of The Methodist Church in Singapore to a church of another denomination, an official "Transfer of Membership to Another Denomination" form shall be used. *ed. 2020*

¶142. If a pastor is informed that a member has without notice united with a church of another denomination, the pastor shall make diligent inquiry; and if the report is confirmed, the pastor shall enter "Withdrawn" after the person's name on the membership roll, and shall report the same at the next Local Conference.

¶143. If a member proposes to withdraw from The Methodist Church in Singapore, that member shall communicate the purpose in writing to the pastor(s) of the local church in which membership is held. On receiving such notice of withdrawal, the pastor(s) shall properly record the fact of withdrawal on the membership roll. If requested, the pastor(s) shall give a statement of withdrawal to such member. Such person, upon written request, may be restored to membership on recommendation of the pastor(s). *ed. 2020*

Section III. Organisation and Administration

¶144. The local church shall be organised so that it can pursue its primary task and mission in the context of its own community – reaching out and receiving with joy all who will respond; encouraging people in their relationship with God and inviting them to commitment to God's love in Jesus Christ; providing opportunities for them to seek strengthening and spiritual formation; and supporting them to live lovingly and justly in the power of the Holy Spirit as faithful disciples.

In carrying out its primary task, it shall be organised so that adequate provision is made for these basic responsibilities:

1. planning and implementing a programme of nurture, outreach and witness for persons and families within and without the congregation;
2. providing for effective pastoral and lay leadership;
3. providing for financial support, physical facilities and the legal obligations of the church;
4. ensuring relationships of the local church organisations to appropriate district and Annual and General Conference structures and programmes; and
5. providing for the proper creation, maintenance and disposition of documentary record material of the local church.

¶145. The basic organisational plan for the local church shall include provision for the following units: a Local Conference, a Local Church Executive Committee, a Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee, a Nominations Committee, and such other elected leaders, committees and task forces as *The Book of Discipline* shall require and such others as the Local Conference may determine. *Am. 2012*

1. Every local church shall develop a plan for organising its administrative and programmatic responsibilities.
2. Each local congregation shall provide a comprehensive programme of nurture, outreach and witness, along with leadership training, in accordance with the mission of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

3. The Local Church Executive Committee and all other administrative and programmatic structures of the local church shall be amenable to the Local Conference.

¶146. *General Provisions*. 1. The **Local Conference** is the basic body in the connectional system of The Methodist Church in Singapore. It shall therefore be organised from the church or churches as set forth in the Constitution and provided that there are at least 120 full members at the time of the Constituting Church Conference (see ¶171). In cases of Local Conferences already organised they shall be allowed to continue in existence irrespective of the number of members. *Am. 2012 Am. 2004 ed. 2020*

2. The membership of the Local Conference shall be the members of the Local Church Executive Committee, local preachers, diaconal ministers, honorary stewards, together with retired itinerant ministers pursuant to ¶554.4, voluntarily located ministers who hold their membership in said Local Conference pursuant to ¶556, the chairperson of the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee and all members of the Local Conference shall have the right to vote. If more than one church is within the Local Conference, all members of each Local Church Executive Committee shall be members of the Local Conference. *Am. 2005* *Am. 2016* *Am. 2024* *Am. 2020.*

3. The district superintendent shall fix the time of meetings of the Local Conference. The Local Conference shall determine the place of meeting *provided* that should necessity arise, the district superintendent and the pastor may fix or change the place of meeting. The Local Conference shall meet in regular session twice annually, the first meeting each church year (hereinafter referred to as the First Local Conference) within three months after the Annual Conference, and the second meeting each church year (hereinafter referred to as the Last Local Conference) within three months before the Annual Conference. *Am. 2012*

4. The district superintendent shall preside at the meetings of the Local Conference or may designate an elder to preside. The district superintendent shall report all questions of law decided at the Local Conference to the president before the next regular *Am. 2012*

session of the Annual Conference after every Local Conference.

5. The members present and voting at any duly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.

6. Special sessions of the Local Conference may be called by the district superintendent after consultation with the pastor-in-charge, or by the pastor(s) with the written consent of the district superintendent. The purpose of such special session shall be stated in the call, and only such business shall be transacted as in harmony with the purposes stated in the call. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2017*

7. Notice of the time and place of a regular or special session of the Local Conference shall be given at least 14 days in advance by two or more of the following modes: by announcement from the pulpit of the church; in its weekly bulletin; a local-church publication; by regular mail; or by email. *Am. 2012*

8. A Local Conference shall be conducted in the language of the majority with adequate provision being made for translation. *Am. 2012*

¶147. *Powers and Duties*. 1. The Local Conference shall be the connecting link between the local church and the general Church and shall have general oversight of the Local Church Executive Committee.

2. The Local Conference, the district superintendent and the pastor(s) shall organise and administer the church(es) according to the policies and plans herein set forth. When the membership size, programme scope, mission resources or other circumstances so require, the Local Conference may, in consultation with and upon the approval of the district superintendent, modify the organisational plans; *provided* that the provisions of ¶144 are observed.

3. The primary responsibilities of the Local Conference shall be to:

a) review and evaluate the total mission and ministry of the church (¶¶101–104);

b) receive annual reports from the various ministries and organisations; and

c) adopt mission statements, visions, strategic plans,

directions, goals and projects recommended by the Local Church Executive Committee which are in keeping with the objectives of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

4. The Local Conference **recording secretary** (being the serving Local Church Executive Committee recording secretary) shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings and shall be the custodian of all records and reports, and with the presiding officer shall sign the minutes. A copy of the minutes shall be provided for the district superintendent. *ed. 2006*

5. a) Provided that nominations from the floor are not denied, at the Last Local Conference, the Local Conference shall upon the recommendation of the Nominations Committee elect persons to serve as stewards and/or in various positions of church leadership as elaborated in ¶¶149–150. Such persons shall be: (1) not less than 21 years of age; (2) of genuine Christian character who love the Church, are morally disciplined and loyal to the ethical standards of The Methodist Church in Singapore set forth in the Social Principles; (3) competent to administer its affairs; and (4) (except for a newly constituted Local Conference) members of the local church for at least one year before election. Unless expressly disallowed by *The Book of Discipline*, a person may hold more than one position if the Local Conference considers it so desirable. Persons not holding any specific position shall nevertheless serve in specific areas of ministry. The terms of office of all persons so elected at the Last Local Conference shall begin at the close of that Local Conference. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2016* *Am. 2020* *ed. 2020*

b) The Local Conference may make provision for recognition of the faithful service of current or previous members of the Local Church Executive Committee who have reached the age of 70 or who may have become physically incapacitated by electing them honorary stewards. Once elected, honorary stewards serve for life and shall be entitled to all the privileges of a steward including membership of the Local Conference (with voting rights) and participation in the Local Church Executive Committee (without voting rights). *Am. 2012* *ed. 2006* *Am. 2020* *Am. 2024* *Am. 2020*

c) Persons elected as stewards shall be voting members of the Local Conference and the Local Church Executive Committee.

6. Save where express term limits are specified in *The Book of Discipline*, the Local Conference shall establish a limit to the consecutive terms of office for any or all of the elected or appointed officers of the local church except where its membership is less than 100. *Am. 2008*

7. The Local Conference shall examine and recommend candidates for the ordained ministry who have been members in good standing of the local church for at least one year, whose gifts, evidence of God's grace and call to the ministry clearly establish them as candidates; and who have met the educational requirements.

8. The Local Conference shall inquire annually into the gifts, labours and usefulness of the local preachers whose membership is within the local church, and recommend the issuance or renewal of the licence to preach. *ed. 2013*

9. The Local Conference shall ensure that the conference commitment apportionments approved by the Annual and General Conferences are included in the church budget and that the amounts are remitted monthly to the Annual Conference treasurer before the end of the financial year. The apportionments to the local church are not subject to change or alteration by the local church. *ed. 2013*

10. The Local Conference shall receive and act on the annual report from the pastor concerning all membership rolls.

11. The Local Conference shall have such other duties and responsibilities as the General Conference or Annual Conference may duly commit to it. *ed. 2013*

¶148. *The Church Conference.* To encourage broader participation by members of the church, the Local Conference may be convened as the **Church Conference**, extending the vote to all local church members present at such meetings. The Church Conference shall be authorised by the district superintendent. It may be called at the discretion of the district superintendent following a written request to the district superintendent by the

Local Conference. Additional regulations governing the call and conduct of the Local Conference shall apply also to the Church Conference.

¶149. 1. The Local Conference, or Church Conference authorised by the district superintendent, shall elect not fewer than eight and not more than 45[56] persons as stewards. These stewards shall serve as members of the Local Church Executive Committee. The president of the Women's Society of Christian Service and heads of organisations sponsored by the local church (where established) shall be additional stewards and voting members of the Local Church Executive Committee in addition to those elected by the Local Conference. *Am. 2016 [2012 Ed. ¶147.5a)] Am. 2020*

2. The stewards so elected shall include the persons elected by the Local Conference to serve in the following specific positions in the Local Church Executive Committee: *Am. 2016*

a) Lay leader and associate lay leader(s) (¶151.1 and ¶154.1b)(2)). *ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

b) Lay delegate(s) to the Annual Conference (¶151.2 and ¶154.1b)(3)). *ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

c) Chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee (¶151.3 and ¶154.1b)(1)). *ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

d) A recording secretary (¶147.4 and ¶154.1b)(6)). *ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

e) Church Treasurer (¶154.1b)(7)) and where the Local Conference thinks appropriate, assistant treasurer(s)[57] *provided* always that the church treasurer shall not serve more than four consecutive one-year terms. *Am. 2008 Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 1 of 2009 ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

f) Chairperson of the Finance Committee (¶154.1b)(8)), and where the Local Conference thinks appropriate, vice-chairperson(s) of the Finance Committee[58] *provided* always that the chairperson *Am. 2008 Refer*

[56] Provision (then part of ¶147.5a) effective from Last Local Conference 2013. Previous maximum was 40 stewards.

[57] Proviso mandatory effective last Local Conference 2009.

[58] Proviso mandatory effective last Local Conference 2009.

shall not serve more than four consecutive one-year terms. *to Judicial Council DD No. 1 of 2009 ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

g) Chairperson of the Property Management Committee (¶154.1b)(9)). *ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

h) Church archivist (¶154.1b)(10)). *ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

i) Chairperson of the Church Governance Committee (¶154.1b)(11)) (who shall be a lay person – but not concurrently the treasurer or Finance Committee chairperson – who shall represent the Church Governance Committee in working together with the Local Church Executive Committee). Where the Local Conference or Church Conference determines an inability to fill this position, it shall authorise the district superintendent to appoint a lay person who is a member of the local church or of another local church within the district to fill this position[59] *provided* always no person shall serve in this position for more than four consecutive one-year terms. *Adopted 2008 Am. 2024 Am. 2016*

j) Chairpersons of the Missions, Outreach and Social Concerns, Witness and Evangelism, Worship and Music, and Discipleship and Nurture Committees (¶154.1b)(12)). *ed. 2009 ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

3. The Local Conference shall also elect upon nomination from the floor: *ed. 2016*

a) the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee; and

b) the elected members of the Nominations Committee (¶170.1). *Am. 2016*

For avoidance of doubt, persons elected into membership of the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee and/or the Nominations Committee are not automatically members of the Local Church Executive Committee but such persons are eligible to be elected as members of the Local Church Executive Committee in their personal capacity or by virtue of other offices to which they may be elected. *Am. 2016*

[59] Proviso mandatory effective last Local Conference 2009.

4. The Local Conference may also elect (as a member of the Local Church Executive Committee) the Church school superintendent. *ed. 2009 ed. 2016 Am. 2016*

5. Provided that nominations from the floor are not denied, the Local Conference shall also elect upon recommendation of the Nominations Committee the reserve delegate(s) to the Annual Conference. For avoidance of doubt, persons elected as reserve delegates are not automatically members of the Local Church Executive Committee but such persons are eligible to be elected as members of the Local Church Executive Committee in their personal capacity or by virtue of other offices to which they may be elected. *ed. 2016* *Am. 2016*

6. The Local Conference shall also elect the members of the Property Management Committee (¶170B), the Finance Committee (¶170C), the Church Governance Committee (¶170E) and the Local Conference representatives to the Joint Management Committee (¶170D) (if any). Unless otherwise stated, these persons need not be members of the Local Church Executive Committee. *ed. 2016 Adopted 2012 Am. 2024*

7. The term of office in a local church shall commence immediately after the adjournment of the Last Local Conference each year. *ed. 2016 Adopted 2012*

8. A vacancy in any of the following local church positions shall be filled by the Local Conference: *ed. 2016 Adopted 2012*

a) chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee;

b) lay leader;

c) chairperson of the Finance Committee;

d) church treasurer, assistant church treasurer;

e) all elected members of the Nominations Committee;

f) all members of the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee;

g) chairperson and all members of the Church Governance Committee; and

h) all lay delegates to the Annual Conference (substantive and reserve).

9. Pending a decision by the Local Conference, the Local *ed. 2016*

Church Executive Committee may fill any position specified in ¶149.8 on an interim basis. *Adopted 2012*

10. Unless otherwise specified, other vacancies in local church positions or local church agency membership may be filled by the Local Church Executive Committee or as the Local Church Executive Committee allows if not filled at the Last Local Conference or if they fall vacant after the Last Local Conference. *ed. 2016* *Adopted 2012*

¶150. 1. As local churches vary in size and needs, and the structure and organisation required will differ, the Local Conference, in order to implement the church's mission, may expand the structure to include such committees and other groups as needed.

2. The Local Conference may in addition to ¶149.1 elect coordinators for:

a) age-levels ministries;
b) family life;
c) small groups;
d) young adult ministry (¶165.5a));
e) single adult ministry (¶165.5b));
f) lay training (¶161.1);
g) stewardship (¶161.2); *ed. 2016*
h) prayer and intercession; *Am. 2016*
i) spiritual formation (¶159.5);
k) ministry with persons with disabilities; and
l) other programmes and ministries as determined by the Local Conference.

3. Where desirable, the Local Conference may combine coordinators' and committee chairpersons' assignments. Coordinators are not members of the Local Church Executive Committee unless the Local Conference otherwise decides generally or specifically. However, persons elected as coordinators are eligible to be elected as members of the Local Church Executive Committee in their personal capacity or by virtue of other positions to which they may be elected. *Am. 2016*

¶151. 1. Out of the general ministry of each local church there

shall be elected by the Local Conference a **lay leader** who shall function as the primary lay representative of the laity in that local church and shall have the following responsibilities:

a) Fostering awareness of the role of laity both within the congregation and through their ministries in the home, workplace, community and world, and finding ways within the community of faith to recognise all these ministries.

b) Meeting regularly with the pastor(s) to discuss the state of the church and the needs for ministry.

c) Membership in the Local Conference and Local Church Executive Committee, the Finance Committee, the Nominations Committee and the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee (where, along with the pastor and the lay delegate(s), the lay leader shall serve as an interpreter of the actions and programmes of the Annual Conference and the general Church) and the Joint Management Committee (where applicable). To be better equipped to comply with this responsibility, it is recommended that a lay leader also serve as a lay delegate of the Annual Conference. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2016* *Am. 2024* *Am. 2024*

d) Continuing involvement in study and training opportunities to develop a growing understanding of the Church's reason for existence and the types of ministry that will most effectively fulfil the Church's mission.

e) Assisting in advising the Local Church Executive Committee of opportunities available and the needs expressed for a more effective ministry of the church through its laity in the community.

f) Informing the laity of training opportunities provided by the Annual Conference. Where possible, the lay leader shall attend training opportunities in order to strengthen his/her work. The lay leader is urged to become a local preacher.

g) Associate lay leaders may be elected, to work with the lay leader, in any local church. It is recommended that associate lay leaders be assigned to at least one ministry committee.

h) The lay leader and associate lay leaders shall serve in the Annual Conference Disciplinary Panel for lay persons pursuant to *Adopted 2012*

¶767.4.

In instances where more than one church is within a local conference, the Local Conference shall elect additional lay leaders so that there will be one lay leader in each church.

2. a) The **lay delegate(s)** of the Annual Conference who shall be not less than 21 years of age, and have been for the four years preceding their election, members in good standing of The Methodist Church in Singapore and one or more reserves shall be elected annually or quadrennially as the Annual Conference directs. If the local conference's lay representative to the Annual Conference shall cease to be a member of the church or shall for any reason fail to serve, a reserve member in the order of election shall serve in place of such person. *Am. 2008* *ed. 2020*

b) Both the lay delegate(s) and reserve(s) shall have been members in good standing in The Methodist Church in Singapore and of the local church from which they are elected for at least four years, except in a newly organised church, which shall have the privilege of representation at the Annual Conference session. The lay delegate(s) of the Annual Conference, along with the pastor and the lay leader, shall serve as an interpreter of the actions and programmes of the Annual Conference. These persons shall report to the Local Church Executive Committee on actions of the Annual Conference as soon as possible, but not later than three months after the close of the conference. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2004* *ed. 2020*

3. The **chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee** shall have the following responsibilities:

a) leading the Local Church Executive Committee in fulfilling its responsibilities;

b) preparing and communicating the agenda of the committee meetings in consultation with the pastor(s), lay leader and other appropriate persons;

c) reviewing and assigning responsibility for the implementation of actions taken by the committee;

d) communicating with members of the committee and others as appropriate to permit informed action at committee meetings;

e) coordinating the various activities of the committee;

f) providing the initiative and leadership for the committee as it does the planning, establishing of objectives and goals, and evaluating;

g) participating in leadership training programmes; and

h) serving, together with the Local Church Executive Committee vice-chairperson(s), in the Annual Conference Disciplinary Panel for lay persons pursuant to ¶767.4. *Adopted 2012*

4. The chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee and vice-chairperson(s) shall be entitled to attend meetings of all committees of the local church unless specifically limited by *The Book of Discipline*, provided always that the chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee and vice-chairperson(s) shall not be entitled to attend meetings of the Nominations Committee, the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee and the Church Governance Committee (save where invited or already a member in a personal capacity). The chairperson is encouraged to attend the Annual Conference and work with the pastor(s) and lay leader(s) to serve as an interpreter of the actions and programmes of the Annual Conference. *Am. 2012*

THE LOCAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

¶152. 1. *Purpose.* The Local Church Executive Committee shall have general oversight of the programme of the local church in pursuing the primary task of the local church. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Local Church Executive Committee should act in concert with the Finance Committee and/or such other committee(s) as relevant with the intent that its committees and members should (where appropriate) be designated to oversee key areas of governance and operations under documented terms of reference (¶144 and ¶152.1A). *ed. 2009* *Am. 2008* *Am. 2024*

1A. *Responsibilities.* As the executive arm of the Local Conference, the Local Church Executive Committee shall: *Am. 2020*

a) Have general oversight of the administration and

programme of the local church. *refer to ¶152.1 and ¶154 (2017 Rev. Ed)*

b) Be responsible for administering the organisation of the local church.

c) Initiate and execute the planning process, establish objectives, adopt goals and programme plans, authorise action, determine policy, receive reports and provide ongoing and regular evaluation and review of the mission and ministries of the church as described in ¶¶102–104 and ¶144. *Am. 2008*

d) Review the membership of the local church. To fulfil this responsibility, the committee shall receive reports from the pastor(s) on membership changes, review practices of membership enlistment, training and care with the pastor, and act on the goals and plans for membership growth.

e) Embrace tithing, regular worship attendance, regular church school and/or Bible study attendance.

f) Establish the budget on recommendation of the Finance Committee.

g) Recommend to the Local Conference the salary and other remuneration for the pastor(s) after receiving recommendations from the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee (where applicable) but only where there is no Annual Conference salary plan. *Am. 2008*

h) Determine, in consultation with the pastor(s) and the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee, the professional staff and other personnel needed to carry out the programmes of the Church, and their remuneration.

i) Ensure the promotion and interpretation of all programmes, special days and appeals authorised by the General and Annual Conferences.

j) Make proper and adequate provision for the financial needs of the local church, including conference commitment apportioned to the local church by the proper authorities; budget and other approved items, and all obligations assumed by the local church. *Am. 2013*

k) Discharge faithfully any and all duties and responsibilities committed to it by the Local Conference or by law of the Church.

l) Make an annual report[60] of its decisions to the last session of the Local Conference. *Adopted 2008*

m) Approve the composition of all Local Church committees except committees whose membership is elected by the Local Conference. *Adopted 2012*

n) Discharge the governance responsibilities applicable to the local church as a registered charity. *Adopted 2020*

ORGANISATION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

¶153. 1. *Meetings.* The Local Church Executive Committee shall meet at least quarterly. Special meetings may be ordered by the Local Church Executive Committee or called by the chairperson or the pastor(s). *Ed. 2020*

2. *Quorum.* The members present and voting at any duly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum[61] *provided* that they are not less than one-third of the voting membership.

3. *Minutes.* Minutes of all Local Church Executive Committee meetings shall be kept on record and circulated to all members of the Local Church Executive Committee as soon as practicable. *Am. 2008*

4. No member, officer or employee of the Local Conference Executive Committee or any local conference agencies shall vote on or take part in deliberations on significant matters directly or indirectly affecting his/her business, income or employment, or the business, income or employment of a member of his/her immediate family. *Adopted 2012*

5. a) *Decisions at Meetings.* Unless otherwise provided or the meeting otherwise decides, all decisions shall require a majority vote of all members present and voting. *Am. 2020*

b) *Decisions Made Between Meetings.* In cases of urgency or *Adopted 2012*

[60] Proviso mandatory effective last Local Conference 2009.

[61] Proviso mandatory effective last Local Conference 2009.

where a physical meeting is impracticable, an absolute majority of the voting membership of the Local Church Executive Committee by affirmative vote may make decisions by way of circular resolutions done by regular mail or email provided always that no such decision shall be made where at least one-tenth of the voting membership or three voting members (whichever is lesser) indicate a preference for a physical meeting. The district superintendent shall be informed of all circulars seeking such decisions at the time of circulation. All such decisions shall be duly reported at the next meeting of the Local Church Executive Committee.

¶154. *Membership.* 1. The membership of the Local Church Executive Committee shall **include**: *Ed. 2020*

a) **the pastor(s)**; and *Am. 2024*

b) the following lay persons who satisfy the qualifying criteria set out in ¶147.5a): *Am. 2016* *Am. 2020*

(1) The **chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee** (who may also serve as the church lay leader and/or lay delegate to the Annual Conference) (¶151.3) but shall not be an employee of the Local Church (¶154.3). *Am. 2024* *Am. 2016*

(2) The **lay leader** and **associate lay leader(s)**, who shall carry out the responsibilities stated in ¶151.1 (the lay leader shall be a member of the Local Conference, the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee, the Finance Committee and the Nominations Committee; and may also serve as chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee). *Am. 2024* *ed. 2016*

(3) The **lay delegate(s)** of the Annual Conference (¶149.2b)) and ¶151.2). *Am. 2024* *ed. 2016*

(4) **The president of Women's Society of Christian Service** (¶149.1). *Am. 2024* *ed. 2016*

(5) The **heads of organisations** sponsored by the local church (where established) (¶149.1). *Am. 2024* *ed. 2016 [2012 Ed ¶153.2f)]*

(6) **The recording secretary** (¶147.4). *Am. 2024* *ed. 2016 [2012 Ed ¶153.2f)]*

(7) The **church treasurer** (¶149.2e)) (who shall not serve more *Am. 2024* *Am. 2008*

than four consecutive one-year terms) and the assistant treasurer(s) (if any) who shall be responsible for maintenance of financial records of income and disbursements, the pledging system, making financial reports to each Local Church Executive Committee meeting and serving on the Finance Committee. It is preferable but not mandatory that the treasurer has relevant accounting qualifications or appropriate financial literacy or appropriate practical experience. *ed. 2016 [2012 Ed ¶153.2f)]*

(8) The **chairperson of the Finance Committee** (¶149.2f)) (who shall not serve more than four consecutive one-year terms) and the vice-chairperson(s) (if any) of the Finance Committee (¶170C) who shall give attention to the financial concerns of the church, and to the support of the Church's ministries. *Am. 2024 Am. 2008 ed. 2016 [2012 Ed ¶153.2f)]*

(9) The **chairperson of the Property Management Committee** (¶149.2g) and ¶170B), who shall give attention to property, facilities and legal concerns (¶170B.2). *Am. 2024 ed. 2016*

(10) The **church archivist** (¶149.2h) and ¶167.1). *Am. 2024 ed. 2016*

(11) The **chairperson of the Church Governance Committee** (¶149.2i) and ¶170E)[62] who shall not concurrently be the treasurer or the chairperson of the Finance Committee nor serve more than four consecutive one-year terms. The chairperson shall represent the Church Governance Committee (¶170E) in working together with the Local Church Executive Committee. *Am. 2024 Adopted 2008 ed. 2016 Am. 2016*

(12) The **chairpersons of committees** of ministry programmes and services including **Missions, Outreach and Social Concerns**, **Witness and Evangelism**, **Worship and Music**, and **Discipleship and Nurture** (¶149.2j) and ¶¶157–161)[63] and the terms of reference of these committees should be approved by the Local Conference and documented unless specified in *The Book of Discipline* (¶156.2). *Am. 2024 Adopted 2008 ed. 2016 ed. 2016*

2. The Local Church Executive Committee may also include:

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[62] Position mandatory effective last Local Conference 2009.

[63] Positions mandatory effective last Local Conference 2009.

a) The **superintendent of the church school** (¶162.2). *ed. 2009*

b) The **coordinator of communications** (¶¶166.1–166.2). *ed. 2009*

c) The **age-level coordinator(s)** for children, youth, adult and seniors, who shall give attention to coordinating ministries for each age level (¶164.1). *ed. 2009*

d) The **family life coordinator,** who shall give attention to family life ministries (¶164.2). *ed. 2009*

e) The **small-group coordinator,** who shall give attention to organisation of small-group structure and coordination of programmes (¶163.3). *ed. 2009*

f) **Persons holding such other positions** as determined by the local conference. *ed. 2013* *ed. 2009* *Am. 2016*

3. The **employed professional and ministry staff** may be members of the Local Church Executive Committee without vote. Such staff shall not be eligible to serve as chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee. *Am. 2008*

4. Involvement in the day-to-day operations of a local church (in either a paid or unpaid capacity) shall not prevent a person from being eligible to serve on the Local Church Executive Committee. For the avoidance of doubt, such person (if serving on the Local Church Executive Committee) shall be subject to ¶153.4. *Adopted 2012*

5. The Local Church Executive Committee shall elect one or more vice-chairpersons from among its members. *Am. 2008*

6. Honorary stewards shall be entitled to attend and participate in meetings of the Local Church Executive Committee with right of voice but without vote although they are not members and shall have full access to all information made available to members. *Am. 2024*

7. *Change in Membership Composition*. Any change in the voting membership of the Local Church Executive Committee shall be notified to the Commissioner of Charities within two weeks of such change or such later time as may be permitted by the Commissioner of Charities. *Am. 2026*

¶155. The task of strategic planning, establishing vision, direction, objectives and goals may be delegated to a smaller group within the Local Church Executive Committee which may include:

the pastor(s); lay leader and associate lay leader(s); chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee; employed professional and ministry staff; and any other persons as the Local Church Executive Committee may determine. This may be known as the **Strategic Planning Task Force** headed by the pastor-in-charge, or a person designated by him. *ed. 2017*

¶156. *Committees.* 1. The Local Conference shall elect annually chairpersons of the following: *Am. 2008*

a) Missions Committee;
b) Outreach and Social Concerns Committee;
c) Witness and Evangelism Committee;
d) Worship and Music Committee; and
e) Discipleship and Nurture Committee.

2. In addition, the Local Conference may elect annually chairpersons of such other committees as it thinks fit and the terms of reference of these committees should be approved by the Local Conference and documented unless specified in *The Book of Discipline* (¶154.1b)(12)). *Adopted 2008* *ed. 2016* *Am. 2016* *Am. 2024*

3. Each committee chairperson, with the guidance of the pastor(s) or a representative from the ministry staff shall: *ed. 2016*

a) study the implications for the ministry in the total mission of the Church;

b) interpret and recommend to the Local Church Executive Committee the ways of implementing the mission of the Church represented by the area;

c) make specific recommendations of the ministry area for different age levels; and *ed. 2013*

d) serve as liaison within and beyond the local church, in particular in relation to the corresponding Annual Conference Programme Boards. *Am. 2004*

4. A representative from the Local Women's Society of Christian Service may be a member on each of these Committees, at the discretion of the Local Conference. *Adopted 2004* *ed. 2016*

¶157. The **Missions Committee** shall give attention to world evangelisation (cross-cultural missions), adopting unreached

people groups and other missions-related concerns. The committee shall:

1. Keep the Local Church Executive Committee aware of the purpose and needs of programmes supported by the Church in the region and around the world.
2. Recommend to the Local Church Executive Committee plans for mission and service projects.
3. Recommend means of keeping the Church informed of the qualifications and current needs for personnel to serve through the Church around the world.
4. Study and make recommendations on proposals for adoption of unreached people groups and its implementation and programme, providing for evaluation, review and discontinuance where necessary.

¶158. The **Outreach and Social Concerns Committee** shall give attention to local and larger community ministries of compassion, church and society issues and health and welfare ministries. The committee shall:

1. Keep the Local Church Executive Committee aware of the need for study and action in the areas of social issues and education, service, witness and action; the purpose and needs of volunteering in the local community and of the involvement of the Church members in volunteering.
2. Survey the needs of the local community and make programme recommendations for responding to local, community, national and international needs to which the Church ministers by its service, education, witness and action.
3. Develop an understanding of the talents and skills of the church members and make them aware of matching opportunities for the giving of personal service.
4. Maintain liaison between the local church, its members and established social concerns agencies within the community. *ed. 2013*
5. Promote volunteering as a benefit to the local church, the individual volunteer and the agencies as an expression of our Christian concern. *ed. 2013*

¶159. The **Witness and Evangelism Committee** shall give attention to membership care, spiritual formation, communications, and witnessing through the sharing of personal and congregational testimony of Christian experience, faith and service. The committee shall:

1. Work with the pastor(s) and the Local Church Executive Committee to make evangelism an ongoing priority ministry of the congregation to win people to a profession or a renewal of faith in Jesus Christ.

2. Recommend activities (which shall include training in personal evangelism and follow-up ministry) and structure to respond to the evangelistic mission of the local church.

3. Include in its concerns people who are not members in any local church, the church's own inactive members and the care of all its members.

4. Be responsible for:

a) working with all organisations of the local church to identify and reach out to persons who are neither members nor active in a church; *ed. 2013*

b) helping persons share the good news of Jesus Christ;

c) keeping a current prospect file (of potential Christians);

d) providing visitation programmes;

e) inviting persons to Christian discipleship in the worship services;

f) planning specific evangelism events;

g) incorporating new members; and

h) assisting in the possibilities of starting new congregations.

5. In cooperation with the pastor(s) and ministry staff, develop and implement programmes of membership care, growth in witness and spiritual formation including distribution of devotional resources.

¶160. The **Worship and Music Committee** shall:

1. Assist all within the congregation to understand the meaning, purpose and practice of worship.

2. Promote the use of Methodist worship material.

3. Encourage and support the recognition of musicians and choristers in the local congregation, and discover and develop persons to serve in the ministry of worship (this responsibility may also include teaching persons of all ages our heritage of song and the use of music in worship).

4. Encourage the study of worship by individuals and groups.

5. Plan for the ministry and training of lay persons as worship leaders.

6. Care for furnishings, paraments and sacramental elements for congregational worship.

7. Recommend the placement and use of memorial gifts for worship.

8. Encourage wider use and understanding of visual arts, dramatic arts and architectural design as expressions of faith and means of proclamation of the gospel.

¶161. The **Discipleship and Nurture Committee** shall give attention to lay training, stewardship and where applicable, church school and small groups.

1. *Lay Training.* The committee shall:

a) Design and recommend to the Local Church Executive Committee an organisation of the training programme of the local church which shall include courses in discipleship, theology, bible study and contemporary Christian concerns. *ed. 2013*

b) Assure that persons of all ages are provided with opportunities to consider their vocation as Christians and particular opportunities to express vocation of ministry in their chosen careers and occupations.

c) In cooperation with the pastor(s), assure that opportunities for professional church-related ministries are interpreted within the congregation.

d) Work with the church school superintendent to organise training for church school personnel.

2. *Stewardship.* The committee shall:

a) Interpret and encourage stewardship consistent with the historic standards of the Methodist Church. *ed. 2020*

b) Encourage both individual and corporate stewardship with tithing as the minimum goal of giving in The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

c) Emphasise (using Scripture, tradition, reason and experience as a basis) that stewardship has five components: (1) the use of God-given talents; (2) personal financial management and life commitments; (3) personal giving through the local church; (4) local church management of resources; and (5) the Christian steward's responsibility in God's world. *ed. 2013*

d) Work with others on the Local Church Executive Committee to formulate plans and recommend resources to encourage growth in each of these areas.

e) Consider organising a **Wills and Estate Planning Task Force** which shall have the responsibility to:

(1) emphasise the need for adults of all ages to have a will and an estate plan and provide information on the preparation of these to the members of the congregation;

(2) stress the opportunities for church members and constituents to make provisions for giving through Methodist churches, institutions, agencies and causes by means of wills, annuities, trusts, life insurance, memorials and various types of property;

(3) arrange for the dissemination of information that will be helpful in preretirement planning, including such considerations as establishing a living trust; and

(4) recommend an educational design to stress the need for each person to designate someone to serve as a responsible advocate should independent decision-making ability be lost.

¶162. *The Church School.* 1. In each local church there shall be a church school for the purpose of accomplishing the church's educational ministry.

a) The church school provides a variety of settings and resources for all persons – children, youth and adults – to explore the meanings of the Christian faith in all its dimensions, to discover and appropriate to themselves those meanings which are relevant for their lives and for society, and to assume personal responsibility

for expressing those meanings in all their relationships. Through such experiences persons will be encouraged to commit themselves to Christ and to unite with the Christian community through membership in a local church.

b) All the concerns of the church will be present in the church school's educational ministry: Church and society, evangelism, missions, stewardship and worship. The curriculum of the church school will include the meanings and experiences of the Christian faith as found in the Bible, in history and in human encounter with the natural world and contemporary society, not neglecting the dynamic impact of science and technology and their positive applications to human welfare, opening new understandings of God's purpose in the universe and contributing to our growth in participatory grace.

c) To further the church's educational and nurturing ministry, a church library or resource centre should be established wherever possible.

d) The church school may be organised with three divisions if desired: (1) children's division for persons from birth through the primary school; (2) youth division for persons in secondary school through polytechnic or university; and (3) adult division for persons beyond school. Division superintendents, teachers, counsellors, curriculum resources secretaries, librarians and such other officers as needed to administer and operate the church school may be appointed by the superintendent of the church school in consultation with the pastor(s) or representative of the employed professional and ministry staff.

2. Unless the Local Conference otherwise decides because the responsibilities are discharged by the pastor(s), employed staff and/or such other person(s) (howsoever designated) as the Local Conference may elect, the Local Conference shall elect a **church school superintendent** who shall be responsible, with the guidance of the pastor(s) or representative of the employed professional and ministry staff, for the supervision of the total programme of education in the church school. Responsibilities may include: *Am. 2016*

a) serving as the administrator of the church school;

b) working with the Discipleship and Nurture Committee in the training and selection of church school teachers and leaders;

c) identifying the needs for various kinds of study opportunities and recommending plans for a study programme in accordance with those needs;

d) serving as an educational consultant to persons responsible for the Christian education of children, youth, adults, seniors and family life;

e) developing and implementing programmes to promote church school attendance and participation; and

f) evaluating the effectiveness of the study programme of the local church. When desirable, in local churches with small membership, the Local Conference may combine responsibilities of the church school superintendent and the chairperson of the Discipleship and Nurture Committee. *ed. 2013*

¶163. *Small Groups, Small-Group Leaders, and Small-Group Meetings.*

1. A structure for Small Groups, Small-Group Leaders, and Small-Group Meetings may be organised within the local congregation under the supervision of the pastor(s) with the following responsibilities and programmes:

a) Small Groups may be organised to meet regularly for the purpose of: Bible study and prayer; spiritual nurture; care and support of members; evangelistic outreach; involvement of new members; and accountable discipleship in the community.

b) Small Groups may be formed as regional groups, clusters of families, interest groups or age-level groups.

c) Where Small Groups are formed, Small-Group Leaders may be appointed by the Local Church Executive Committee under the direct supervision of the pastor(s) or a member of the professional staff of the local church appointed by the pastor(s) and the Small-Groups coordinator. *ed. 2013*

d) Where Small-Group Leaders are appointed, they may meet regularly with the pastor(s) and the lay leader of the congregation.

2. A **Small-Group Committee** may be formed with the Small-Group coordinator as chairperson. *ed. 2006*

3. The **Small-Group coordinator** (if elected) shall assist the pastor(s) in: *ed. 2006 Am. 2016*

a) the coordination of the small-group programme and structure;

b) the organisation of small-group events including training of members and leaders; and

c) promotion of small-group ministry so that there may be maximum participation by members.

¶164. *Age-Level, Family and Specialised-Ministries Coordinators.*

1. The Local Conference may elect annually a **coordinator of children's ministries**, a **coordinator of youth ministries**, a **coordinator of adult ministries**, a **coordinator of seniors ministries** and a **family life coordinator**. Where young adult and specific age-level ministries would be enhanced, coordinators of young adult and/or single adult ministries may be elected. Where needs for specialised areas of ministry arise (for example, single adults or persons with disabilities), coordinators of these areas of ministry may be elected. Each of the coordinators shall, under the guidance of the pastor(s) or a representative from the employed professional and ministry staff and the chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee, study the needs of the age group and the goals of the congregation's ministry and coordinate the planning and implementation of a unified and comprehensive ministry with the age group. Each coordinator shall serve as liaison with organisations, persons and resources in and beyond the local church which relate to the particular age level. The coordinator shall represent on the Local Church Executive Committee the concerns of age-level organisations when they are not otherwise represented. Youth and adult ministry coordinators, in cooperation with others holding related responsibilities, will bring before the congregation Christian vocation as a calling to ministry in all spheres of life.

2. The **family life coordinator** (if elected) shall work with the *ed. 2013*

age-level coordinators (if elected) and the Local Church Executive Committee to develop a family ministry for the local church, taking into consideration the suggestions of the Annual Conference Board of Discipleship and Nurture. This coordinator shall keep the Local Church Executive Committee aware of resources and activities to be used in planning family activities in the local church and home, in the guidance of families in Christian living in the home and in helping families find opportunities for service in the community and the world. *Am. 2016*

¶165. *Age-Level and Family Life Committees.* Where the size of the local church and the extent of the programme indicate the need, the work of the Local Church Executive Committee may be facilitated by one or more **age-level committees** and/or a **family life committee**, or such other means as fit the needs of the congregation. The age-level committees shall work under the leadership of the age-level coordinators (if elected) to expedite the work of the Local Church Executive Committee in adapting the programme to the age level. *ed. 2013* *Am. 2016*

The membership of these committees may include the following:

1. *Children's Ministries Committee.* Representative teachers and leaders of children's activities of the local church (including its activities in music and other arts), representative parents and representatives of committees (Missions, Outreach and Social Concerns, Witness and Evangelism, Worship and Music, and Discipleship and Nurture) related to the local church's ministry with children. *ed. 2013*

2. a) *Youth Ministries Committee.* Representatives of adult leaders and counsellors of youth, representative parents, representatives of committees (Missions, Outreach and Social Concerns, Witness and Evangelism, Worship and Music, and Discipleship and Nurture) related to the local church's ministry with youth, representatives of the local church's activities in music and the other arts, a youth and an adult from each youth-serving organisation sponsored by the local church, and in a number that is *ed. 2013*

at least one youth for each adult on the committee.

b) *Youth Ministries.* The term "youth ministries" is an inclusive title, encompassing all the concerns of the local church and all activities by, with and for youth. The youth ministries of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall include all persons from approximately 12 through 23 years of age, who are currently or potentially associated with the local church or any of its activities. Youth who are full members of the local church have all rights and responsibilities of church membership. *ed. 2013* *ed. 2020*

(1) The coordinator of youth ministries (if elected) shall be responsible for recommending to the Local Church Executive Committee activities, programme emphases and settings for youth. *Am. 2016*

(2) The local church may designate one of its settings as the Methodist Youth Fellowship.

3. *Adult Ministries Committee.* Representatives of adult study or action groups, fellowship groups, administrative groups, service organisations such as Women's Society of Christian Service and special adult ministries; and representatives of committees (Missions, Outreach and Social Concerns, Witness and Evangelism, Worship and Music, and Discipleship and Nurture) related to the local church's ministry with adults. *ed. 2013*

4. a) *Seniors Ministries Committee.* Representatives of senior fellowship groups, special seniors ministries and representatives of committees (Missions, Outreach and Social Concerns, Witness and Evangelism, Worship and Music, and Discipleship and Nurture) related to the local church's ministry with seniors. *ed. 2013*

b) *Seniors Ministries.* A ministry by, with and for older adults shall serve the two-fold purpose of meeting the needs of such persons in the local church and community and recognising the valuable contribution they can make to the ministry and mission of the local church in the community and world. Seniors in the local church shall be recognised as full participants in the fellowship, ministry and service of the congregation. *ed. 2013*

5. Where special adult ministries would be enhanced **Young Adult** and/or **Single Adult** ministries may be organised.

a) *Young Adult Ministry.* The ministry of the local church shall include and be extended to persons out of school (approximately 24 through 35 years of age). Such ministry shall seek to meet the needs of young adults and bring them to a knowledge of Jesus Christ. Such ministry shall be the responsibility of the Local Church Executive Committee, working through its adult coordinator or young adult coordinator, if elected. A cooperative approach to young adult ministries with other churches, community organisations and groups shall be encouraged as a valid outreach ministry of the local church.

b) *Single Adult Ministry.* The ministry of the local church shall include and be extended to persons of all ages who are single, widowed, divorced, never married or married and spouse-absent. These persons share unique needs and life situations toward which the local church can direct its support, love and Christian responsibility. Such a ministry shall be the responsibility of the Local Church Executive Committee, working through its adult coordinator or single adult coordinator, if elected. A cooperative approach to single adult ministries with other churches, community organisations and groups shall be encouraged as valid outreach ministry of the local church. *ed. 2013*

6. *Family Life Committee.* When the size of the local church and the extent of the programme indicate the need, the Local Church Executive Committee may designate a group including representatives of the age-group committees and ministry committees to work with the coordinator in planning programme suggestions to be submitted to the Local Church Executive Committee. *ed. 2013*

¶166. 1. The **coordinator of communications** (if elected) shall assist church members with communication tasks, which are a responsibility of all Christians, making available ideas, resources and skills. The coordinator shall advise and assist committees and organisations of the local church with their communications and help to accomplish effective communications throughout the congregation and make resources available. *ed. 2013* *Am. 2016*

2. Major areas of responsibility are:

a) external communications, to the community;

b) internal communications, within the congregation;

c) promotion of local, district, conference and churchwide programmes;

d) production of church literature including newsletters, pamphlets, brochures, etc; and *ed. 2013*

e) production of video resources for the ministry and outreach of the congregation.

3. A Communications Committee may be formed with the coordinator of communications as chairperson. *ed. 2013*

¶167. 1. The Local Conference shall elect a **church archivist**, who shall keep the **historical records** up to date, serve as chairperson of the Archives and History Committee, and cooperate with the Annual Conference Board of and General Conference Council of Archives and History for the preservation of all local church records and historical materials no longer in current use. Records and historical materials include all documents, minutes, journals, diaries, reports, letters, pamphlets, papers, manuscripts, maps, photographs, books, audiovisuals, sound recordings, magnetic or other tapes, or any other documentary material, regardless of form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to any provisions of *The Book of Discipline* in connection with the transaction of church business by any local church of The Methodist Church in Singapore or any of its constituent predecessors. *ed. 2016* *ed. 2020*

2. There may be a local church **Archives and History Committee**, chaired by the church archivist, to assist in fulfilling these responsibilities.

¶168. *Prison Ministry.* The ministry of the local church should be extended to persons of all ages who are in prison. These persons share unique needs which the local church can meet by offering worship opportunities through Word and Table, through Bible studies and through prayer. Support of families of prisoners should also be a part of this ministry. Such a ministry shall work through *ed. 2013*

its adult coordinator or through a Prison Ministry Coordinator or Committee where applicable.

¶169. Task groups may be formed by the Local Church Executive Committee for the purpose of accomplishing specific and particular goals of the Church's mission to the world. These groups shall be oriented to immediate tasks. They shall be amenable to the Local Church Executive Committee.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES

Am. 2008

¶170. 1. There shall be elected annually by the Local Conference in each local church a **Nominations Committee** who are members of the local church. This committee shall be composed of not more than nine persons, in addition to the pastor(s) and the lay leader. The pastor-in-charge shall be the chairperson and a voting member. Other pastor(s) shall be member(s) without vote. *Am. 2012 ed. 2016 ed. 2017*

2. The committee shall nominate to the Local Conference or Church Conference in its last session such officers and members of the Local Church Executive Committee, and Local Conference committees (including, where applicable, the Local Conference's representatives to the Joint Management Committee) as the law of the Church requires or as the conference may determine as necessary to its work, *provided* that: *Am. 2008 ed. 2016*

a) to secure experience and stability the membership shall be divided into three classes, one of which shall be elected each year for a three-year term; *ed. 2016*

b) to begin the process of rotation on the first year one class be elected for one year, one class for two years and one for three years; and *ed. 2016*

c) each year the new class of members to serve on the Nominations Committee, and vacancies as they occur, shall be elected from nominees from the floor. *ed. 2016*

3. Where possible, the Local Conference shall strive to ensure that at least one young adult shall serve as a member of the *ed. 2013 Am. 2016*

Nominations Committee.

4. A local church is encouraged to establish a policy that retiring members of the Nominations Committee not succeed themselves. *ed. 2016*

5. The Nominations Committee shall serve throughout the year to guide the Local Church Executive Committee on personnel matters (other than employed staff) and identify and recruit leaders, working in relationship to the committees of the Local Church Executive Committee in both its nominations and personnel guidance. *ed. 2016* *Am. 2016*

6. In the nomination process, care shall be given that each committee and work area, as well as the total nominated personnel shall, as far as possible, be representative of the age level, gender, as well as economic, social and theological orientation of the congregation. *Am. 2004* *ed. 2016*

¶170A. 1. There shall be a **Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee** of not fewer than five nor more than seven lay men and women which shall include the first lay delegate of the Annual Conference and the lay leader of the local church. The members shall be elected annually by the Local Conference upon nomination from the floor. The pastor(s) may appoint one of the members and where more than one pastor is appointed to the church, they shall act collectively in making this appointment. Where there is more than one church in a Local Conference, there shall be one Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee with at least one representative from each congregation. Following the election of the members of the committee, the pastor(s) shall convene a meeting of the committee within ten days. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2008* *ed. 2016* *[2012 Ed ¶170.2]*

2. The Committee shall elect its own chairperson and secretary and may elect a vice-chairperson. *ed. 2016*

3. The committee shall be amenable to the Local Conference and meet at least quarterly. It shall meet additionally at the request of the president, the district superintendent, the pastor(s), any member of the professional staff or the chairperson of the committee. To fulfil their obligation under ordination, their *Am. 2012* *ed. 2016*

connectional responsibility under appointment and duty as pastor(s), all pastors should be present at each meeting of the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee except where they voluntarily excuse themselves. **The pastors shall not have the right to vote in the committee**. The committee shall meet only with the knowledge of the pastor(s) and/or the district superintendent. It may meet with the district superintendent without the pastor(s) being present. However, the pastor(s) or any of the staff under consideration shall be notified prior to such meetings at which his/her employment is discussed, and be brought into consultation immediately thereafter. In the event that only one congregation in a local conference containing more than one church has concerns which it wishes to share, its member(s) in the committee may meet separately with the pastor(s) or any member of the employed professional and ministry staff or the district superintendent, but only with the knowledge of the pastor(s) and/or district superintendent. The committee may meet in closed session upon recommendation of the pastor(s) or any other person accountable to the committee, or the chairperson of the committee, or the district superintendent.

4. The duties of the committee shall include the following: *ed. 2016*

a) To confer and counsel with the pastor(s) and staff in making an effective ministry by being available for counsel, keeping the *ed. 2016* pastor(s) and staff advised concerning conditions within the congregation as they affect relations between the pastor or staff and the people, and the nature and function of the ministry.

b) To consult on matters pertaining to pulpit supply and other *ed. 2016* matters related to effectiveness, comfort and well-being of the pastor(s) and their families. It will also include proposal for salary, travel expense, entertainment allowance, vacation, continuing education, housing and other fringe benefits should the Annual Conference not administer a Pastors' Salary Plan.

c) To confer with the pastor(s) and/or other appointed *ed. 2016* members of the staff and others if it should become evident that the *Am. 2016* best interests of the church and pastor(s) will be served by a change

of pastor(s). The committee shall cooperate with the pastor(s), the district superintendent and the president in securing pastoral leadership. Its relationship to the district superintendent and the president shall be advisory only. *Ed. 2016*

d) To recommend to the Local Church Executive Committee, after consultation with the pastor(s), the professional and other staff positions needed to carry out the work of the local church. The committee and the pastor(s) shall recommend to the Local Church Executive Committee policy and procedures regarding the process for hiring, evaluating, promoting, retiring and dismissing staff. *ed. 2013* *ed. 2016*

e) To recommend to the Local Conference, when the size of the employed staff of the local church makes it desirable, the establishment of a **Personnel Committee** to supervise matters relating to administrative and custodial staff, and, where the Local Conference so decides, professional and ministry staff. When such a Personnel Committee is so established, the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee shall be known as the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2016*

5. In local conferences where there is more than one church, the Local Conference may appoint a local church **pastoral advisory committee** for those local churches desiring such a committee. The advisory committee shall consist of three persons with the chairperson serving as the local church's representative. The pastoral advisory committee shall meet upon request of the pastor(s) or of the chairperson, and its duties shall be those outlined in ¶¶170A.4a)–170A.4b). *ed. 2013* *ed. 2016*

6. The chairperson of the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committee or Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, as the case may be, shall serve in the Annual Conference Disciplinary Panel for lay persons pursuant to ¶767.4. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2016*

¶170B. 1. Except where all its functions are performed by a Joint Management Committee (¶170D) in the case of two or more Local Conferences sharing the same premises, there shall be a **Property Management Committee** which shall be amenable to the Local Church Executive Committee. *Am. 2008* *ed. 2016 [2012 Ed ¶170.3]*

2. *Functions.* *ed. 2016*

a) The Committee shall be responsible for the managing, repairing and maintaining of any and all properties of The Methodist Church in Singapore in which the local church is located, and which are assigned to its care by the General Conference. *ed. 2013* *ed. 2016*

b) The Committee shall have the management, supervision, oversight and care of all real property, including the furniture and equipment therein. *ed. 2016*

3. *Membership.* It shall consist of not fewer than three, nor more than 11[64] members, each of whom shall be not less than 21 years of age, and shall be a member of that local church. Its members shall be elected at the Local Conference and any vacancy may be filled by the Local Church Executive Committee for the unexpired term. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2016*

¶170C. 1. There shall be a **Finance Committee**, amenable to the Local Church Executive Committee and elected annually by the Local Conference upon nomination by the Nominations Committee, composed of its chairperson; the chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee; the coordinator of stewardship (if any); the lay leader; the treasurer(s); the vice-chairperson(s) (if any); and other members to be added as the Local Conference may determine. *ed. 2009* *ed. 2016 [2012 Ed ¶170.4]* *Am. 2024*

2. The committee shall organise and administer the financial resources of the local church under the guidance of the Local Church Executive Committee by: *ed. 2016*

a) Preparing of the annual budget for review and approval of the Local Church Executive Committee and adoption by the Local Conference, taking into consideration commitments and apportionments payable to the General and Annual Conferences, and recommendations of the various committees of the local church. After the budget has been approved, additional changes in the budget must be approved by the Local Church Executive Committee. *ed. 2013*

b) Developing and implementing of strategies and plans to raise sufficient income to meet the budget adopted by the Local

[64] Provision effective from Last Local Conference 2013. Previous maximum was eight members.

Church Executive Committee.

c) Ensuring that the church treasurer(s) shall disburse all monies contributed to causes represented in the local church budget, and such other funds and contributions as the Local Church Executive Committee may determine. The church treasurer(s) shall remit each month conference commitments to the annual conference treasurer. The church treasurer(s) shall make regular and detailed reports on funds received and expended to the Finance Committee and the Local Church Executive Committee. *ed. 2013*

d) Making provision for an annual audit of the financial records of the local church and all its organisations and shall report to the Local Conference.

e) Recommending to the Local Church Executive Committee proper depositories for church funds. Funds received shall be deposited promptly in the name of the local church. *ed. 2013*

f) Ensuring that contributions designated for specific causes and objects shall be promptly forwarded according to the intent of the donor and shall not be used for any other purpose.

g) Preparing annually a report to the Local Church Executive Committee of all designated funds which are separate from the current expenses budget.

h) Designating at least two persons (preferably not of the same family) to count the offering, giving a record of funds received to the church treasurer(s). Funds received shall be deposited promptly in accordance with procedures established by the Finance Committee. The church treasurer(s) or a designated member of the committee shall keep records of the contributions. *ed. 2013*

i) Developing policies governing the giving of loans and donations to any related or unrelated parties or individuals (including employees) for approval by the Local Church Executive Committee and to oversee the implementation of the same. *Adopted 2008*

j) Ensuring that the local church financial manual is in place and reviewed regularly. *Adopted 2008*

¶170D. 1. Whenever two or more Local Conferences share the same premises, there shall be a **Joint Management Committee** *ed. 2016 [2012 Ed ¶170.5]*

which shall be amenable to the General Conference.

2. *Functions.* *ed. 2016*

a) The Committee shall coordinate the use of all properties of The Methodist Church in Singapore in which the local churches are located. *ed. 2013* *ed. 2016* *ed. 2020*

b) It shall appoint a committee comprising an equal number of representatives from each Local Conference to oversee the Nursery Programme or Kindergarten of the local churches, which shall be responsible to the Joint Management Committee. *ed. 2013* *ed. 2016*

c) The Joint Management Committee shall set its own budget and it shall submit its annual statement of accounts to the General Conference Executive Council. *ed. 2016*

3. *Membership.* The Committee shall consist of not fewer than three nor more than five representatives from each Local Conference, including the chairperson of the Local Church Executive Committee and the lay leader. It shall elect its own chairperson, secretary and treasurer annually. *ed. 2013* *ed. 2016* *Am. 2024* *Am. 2020*

4. *Ex-Officios.* The pastor(s) of each local church and the administrative officer, if any, shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. *Am. 2024*

¶170E. 1. There shall be a **Church Governance Committee**[65] amenable to the Local Conference and elected annually by the Local Conference upon nomination by the Nominations Committee composed of a chairperson (¶149.2i) and ¶154.1b)(11)) and not less than two nor more than six other persons, none of whom shall be concurrently the church treasurer(s) or the Finance Committee chairperson. Where the Local Conference or Church Conference determines an inability to fill any of these positions, it shall authorise the district superintendent to appoint lay person(s) who is or are member(s) of the local church or of other local church(es) within the district to fill these positions. The *ed. 2013* *Adopted 2008* *ed. 2016 [2012 Ed ¶170.6]* *Am. 2024*

[65] Committee mandatory effective last Local Conference 2009.

Church Governance Committee shall work together with the Local Church Executive Committee. Its terms of reference should be approved by the Local Conference or Church Conference, and documented. Such terms of reference may include the responsibility to: *Am. 2016*

a) review the audit plans of the external auditors; *Adopted 2008*

b) review the external auditors' reports on the financial statements and their management letter on internal controls; *Adopted 2008*

c) review the cooperation given by staff to the external auditors; *Adopted 2008*

d) review, to the extent feasible, the adequacy of internal controls and the scope and results of the internal audit procedures (if any); *Adopted 2008*

e) nominate external auditors for appointment by the Local Conference; *Adopted 2008*

f) review compliance with such functions and duties as may be required under the relevant statutes or the Charities Act, and by such amendments made thereto from time to time; *Adopted 2008*

g) review interested person transactions and procedures on awarding contracts to interested parties, if any; *Adopted 2008*

h) review the remuneration packages of employees who are related to Local Church Executive Committee members, if any; *Adopted 2008*

i) review the financial manual and monitor compliance thereof; *Adopted 2008*

j) investigate matters in its terms of reference, and shall have access to and have the cooperation of employees and the Local Church Executive Committee. The Governance Committee shall have the discretion to invite Local Church Executive Committee members or employees to attend its meetings, as well as to requisition reasonable resources to enable it to discharge its functions effectively; and *ed. 2013* *Adopted 2008*

k) review the appropriateness of the financial reserves policy (if any). *Adopted 2008*

Section IV. The Method of Organising a New Local Church

¶171. 1. A new local church or mission shall be established only with the consent of the president and the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall designate the district within whose bounds the new local church shall be organised, and the district superintendent of that district shall be the agent in charge of the project. *ed. 2013*

2. The district superintendent shall call at least 120 persons interested in the proposed church to meet at an appointed time and place, or may by written authorisation designate any minister in the district to call such a meeting. *Am. 2004*

3. The district superintendent, or the elder to whom authority is designated, shall preside, and shall appoint a secretary to keep a record of the meeting. Following a period of worship, opportunity shall be given those in attendance to present themselves for membership by proper certificate of transfer. The pastor issuing such certificate to a church not yet organised shall describe therein the proposed new church to which it is issued – as, for instance, "the proposed new church on Epworth Avenue". *ed. 2013*

4. Persons desiring to become members on profession of their faith in Christ shall also be given opportunity to present themselves for membership. When the presiding elder is satisfied as to the genuineness of their faith and purpose, they shall be received into the membership of the local church. *ed. 2013*

5. A list shall be made of all persons received into the membership of the proposed church, by transfer and on profession of faith. Those persons shall be members of the **Constituting Church Conference**, and each shall be entitled to vote.

6. The Constituting Church Conference shall then be called to order. A nominations committee, appointed by the presiding elder, in consultation with the district superintendent (if applicable), or elected upon nominations from the floor as the conference may determine, shall nominate stewards of the proposed Local Church Executive Committee. The presiding elder shall be the chairperson

of the Nominations Committee. When the stewards have been elected in proper number, the presiding elder shall declare the church properly constituted.

7. The presiding elder shall then adjourn the Constituting Church Conference and call to order the Local Conference. The membership of the Local Conference shall be those newly elected and any others entitled to membership. The Local Conference shall then elect such officers of the local church as *The Book of Discipline* requires, and shall set up committees as provided in *The Book of Discipline*. When such officers have been duly elected and the proper committees constituted, the local church is duly organised, and from this point its work shall proceed as described in *The Book of Discipline*; *provided* that when a newly organised local church is attached to a circuit, the Local Conference shall not be held until such time as representatives from all the local churches within the circuit can be properly assembled for that purpose. *ed. 2013* *ed. 2016*

Section V. Transfer of Local Church

¶172. A local church may be transferred from one Annual Conference to another because of closer affinity or for any other reason by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting in each of the following:

1. the Local Conference;
2. a Church Conference of the local church; and
3. each of the two Annual Conferences involved.

Upon announcements of the required majorities by the Presidents involved the transfer shall be immediately effective. The move for transfer may originate in the local church or either of the Annual Conferences involved and shall be effective regardless of the order in which taken. In each case a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting shall remain effective unless and until rescinded prior to the completion of transfer by a majority of those present and voting.

Section VI. Special Sundays

¶173. 1. The special Sundays in The Methodist Church in Singapore are intended to be illustrative of the nature and calling of the Church and are celebrated annually. The special Sundays are placed on the calendar in the context of the Christian year, which is designed to make clear the calling of the Church as the people of God, and to give persons the opportunity of contributing offerings to special programmes. The special Sundays shall be Sundays of churchwide emphasis. *ed. 2013* *ed. 2020*

2. Special Sundays provide opportunities for churchwide offerings and expression of our commitment: *ed. 2013*

a) Aldersgate or Heritage Sunday;
b) Laity Sunday;
c) Methodist Schools Sunday;
d) Missions or Methodist Missions Society Sunday;
e) Social Concerns or Methodist Welfare Services Sunday;
f) Trinity Theological College Sunday; and *ed. 2013*
g) Women's Society of Christian Service Sunday.

3. Annual Conferences and local churches may in their discretion determine other special Sundays with or without offering.

Chapter Two
THE CONFERENCES

The Methodist Church in Singapore is a connectional structure maintained through its chain of conferences. *ed. 2020*

Section I. The General Conference

¶201. The General Conference may become a body corporate under the laws of the country.

¶202. *Composition.* 1. The membership of the General Conference shall consist of not less than 30 or more than 70 delegates, one-half of whom shall be ministers and one-half lay members, to be elected by the Annual Conferences and Provisional Annual Conferences.

2. The General Conference shall determine the ratio and basis of representation.

3. Delegates to the General Conference shall be elected at the session of the Annual Conference held in the calendar year preceding the regular session of the General Conference. At least 30 days prior to the beginning of the calendar year, the secretary of the General Conference shall notify the president and the secretary of each Annual Conference of the number of delegates to be elected by that Annual Conference. *ed. 2016*

4. The secretary of each Annual Conference shall report to the secretary of the General Conference the names, addresses and such other information as may be required for delegates and reserves elected by the Annual Conference.

¶203. *Presiding Officer.* The bishop shall be the presiding officer at the General Conference. When the bishop is unable to preside at the General Conference or when it would be inappropriate (due to an actual or potential conflict of interests) for the bishop to preside: *Am. 2012*

1. the Council of Presidents (excluding the bishop when the *Adopted 2012*

bishop is unable to be consulted or where the presidents of the Annual Conferences deem it is inappropriate to consult the bishop) shall nominate an elder to preside. Such elder may be one of the presidents or a minister who is a ministerial delegate to the General Conference or a Methodist elder other than from The Methodist Church in Singapore (such as a visiting bishop); *ed. 2016* *ed. 2020*

2. in the absence of such a nomination, a minister who is a ministerial delegate to the General Conference shall be elected to preside *pro tempore* by secret ballot from the floor upon nomination but without debate; and *Adopted 2012*

3. in the absence of such a nomination and until a minister is elected pursuant to ¶203.2, the minister having the most seniority in service as an elder among the General Conference delegates present shall preside *pro tempore*. *Adopted 2012* *ed. 2016*

¶204. *Conference Secretary.* 1. Each regular session of the General Conference shall elect from the ministerial or lay membership of The Methodist Church in Singapore, a secretary who shall serve until the next regular session when a successor is elected. The election shall be by ballot if there be two or more nominees. The secretary, if not a delegate, shall have right to the floor without the privilege of voting. *ed. 2016* *ed. 2020* *Am. 2024*

2. The secretary shall assume the responsibilities of the office of secretary immediately after the adjournment of the General Conference, and shall publish the journal of the next General Conference not later than six months after its adjournment, which journal shall (with the assistance of the secretary elected at the previous regular session of the General Conference) include the proceedings of all special sessions held since the adjournment of the previous regular session, the call or notice of such special sessions and all papers distributed to delegates at the regular session and/or special sessions. *Am. 2008*

3. The General Conference shall elect, upon the nomination of the secretary, such assistant secretaries from the ministerial or lay membership of The Methodist Church in Singapore as it may deem wise. If in the interim of the quadrennial sessions of the General *ed. 2016* *ed. 2020*

Conference, the office of secretary or assistant secretary shall for any reason be vacated, the General Conference Executive Council shall appoint a successor to serve until the next regular session.

4. The duties of the General Conference secretary shall be to:

a) Organise sessions of the General Conference.

b) Record the proceedings of the sessions and to publish the journal of the General Conference not later than six months after its adjournment.

c) Keep the General Conference records and to transfer the same to the succeeding secretary and to the archives of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2016* *ed. 2020*

d) Be responsible for the minutes of the General Conference Executive Council.

e) Attend to such other matters as the General Conference may so order.

¶205. *Rules of Order.* The General Conference shall adopt a Plan of Organisation and Rules of Order which may be altered or modified by action of the General Conference.

¶206. *Quorum.* When the General Conference is in session it shall require the presence of a majority of the whole number of delegates to the General Conference to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; but a smaller number may take a recess or adjourn from day to day in order to secure a quorum and at the final session may approve the journal, order the record of the roll call and adjourn to a time to be fixed. *ed. 2016*

¶207. *Petitions to General Conference.* Any organisation, minister, or lay member of The Methodist Church in Singapore may petition the General Conference in the following manner: *ed. 2020* *ed. 2016*

1. The petition must be sent to the secretary of the General Conference or a designated petitions secretary (if any). *Am. 2024* *Am. 2016*

2. Each petition must be limited to only one paragraph of *The Book of Discipline* or, if *The Book of Discipline* is not affected, one issue. The petition must state the paragraph of *The Book of Discipline* to which it relates (if applicable), any proposed amendments where needed to *The Book of Discipline* and the *Am. 2024* *Am. 2024*

reasons in support of the petition.

3. Each petition must be signed by the person(s) submitting it, accompanied by appropriate identification, such as address, local church, or Methodist board or agency relationship. *Am. 2024*

4. Petitions must be received by the secretary of the General Conference or a designated petitions secretary (if any) no later than 90 days prior to the opening session of the General Conference. *Am. 2016* *Am. 2024*

Exceptions to the time limitations shall be granted for petitions originating from an Annual Conference session held within 60 days prior to any day when the General Conference is in regular quadrennial session or any special session of the General Conference called to consider such petitions, and for other petitions at the discretion of the General Conference. *Am. 2004* *Am. 2024*

¶208. *Voting by Orders.* The ministerial and lay delegates shall deliberate as one body, but a separate vote shall be taken on any question when requested by one-third of either order of delegates present and voting. In all cases of separate voting, it shall require the concurrence of a majority of each order to adopt a proposed measure. However, changes in the Constitution shall comply with Articles 46–48 of the Constitution. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2006*

¶209. All legislation of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore and amendments to the Rules of Organisation and Administration shall become effective upon enactment unless otherwise specified. *ed. 2020*

¶210. *Speaking for the Church.* 1. Except as provided in ¶382.5 or as the General Conference shall otherwise decide, no person, organisation or media has the authority to express an official view or position on behalf of The Methodist Church in Singapore, this right having been reserved exclusively to the General Conference. Any written public policy statement issued by an agency shall clearly identify either at the beginning or at the end that the statement represents the position of that agency and not necessarily the position of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2016* *ed. 2020* *Am. 2020* *ed. 2020*

2. Any individual member called to testify before a legislative body to represent The Methodist Church in Singapore shall be *ed. 2020*

allowed to do so only by reading, without elaboration, the resolutions and positions adopted by the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

Section II. Provisional Annual Conference

¶221. A **Provisional Annual Conference** is a conference which, because of its limited membership, does not qualify for Annual Conference status.

¶222. Any Mission established under the provisions of *The Book of Discipline* may be constituted as a Provisional Annual Conference by the General Conference, *provided* that: *ed. 2016*

1. no Provisional Annual Conference shall be organised with fewer than ten ministerial members, or be continued with fewer than five ministerial members;

2. this provision shall not apply to Provisional Annual conferences that are founder members of The Methodist Church in Singapore; *ed. 2020*

3. no Annual Conference may form or permit to be formed a Provisional Annual Conference or even an Annual Conference from within itself for work among the same group of people; and

4. in any work within any particular group of people in West Malaysia, East Malaysia and Singapore there shall be no more than one Annual Conference or Provisional Annual Conference to carry out that work.

¶223. *Organisation.* A Provisional Annual Conference shall be organised in the same manner and have the same powers and functions as an Annual Conference, subject to the approval of the General Conference.

Section III. Mission

¶224. *Definition.* A **Mission** is an administrative body for a field of work inside or outside the structures of any Annual Conference, or Provisional Annual Conference, which is under the care of the Methodist Missions Society.

The purpose of a Mission is to provide ministry with a particular group or region whose needs cannot be fully met with the existing structures and resources of the Annual Conference(s). It may also be the initial stage in moving toward the formation of a Provisional Annual Conference.

The establishment of a Mission may involve special considerations in areas of leadership, language resources and/or property.

¶225. *Establishment and Administration of a Mission.* 1. The Methodist Missions Society, in consultation with the bishop and the Council of Presidents, shall determine the need and set the boundaries for the Mission established within an Annual Conference, across conference lines, or for another extended region or constituency.

2. When the Mission lies within the boundaries of one Annual Conference area, the president of that conference shall oversee the work of the Mission. When the Mission lies outside the boundaries of any Annual Conference, the bishop in consultation with the Methodist Missions Society may appoint a superintendent to oversee the work of the Mission. *ed. 2016* *Am. 2004*

3. A Mission shall meet annually at the time and place designated by the bishop who shall preside. In the absence of the bishop a superintendent of the Mission shall preside. *ed. 2016*

4. The annual meeting shall have the power to certify candidates for the ordained ministry, to pass on the character of preachers who are not members of an Annual Conference, and to recommend to an Annual Conference proper persons for probationary membership and deacon's orders. The examination of supply pastors shall be held by the Mission and certified to an Annual Conference. *ed. 2016*

5. The Bishop shall, at the annual meeting, in consultation with the Methodist Missions Society assign the missionaries and mission travelling preachers to the several charges for the ensuing year. *ed. 2016*

Section IV. The Annual Conference

¶231. *Purpose.* The purpose of the Annual Conference is to make disciples for Jesus Christ by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.

¶232. *Composition of the Annual Conference.* 1. The ministerial delegates of an Annual Conference shall consist of members in full connection, members on trial, affiliate members and supply pastors under full-time appointment to a church. *Am. 2016*

a) Subject to b) below, members in full connection shall have the right to vote on all matters in the Annual Conference and shall have the sole responsibility for all matters of ordination, character and conference relations of ministers. *Am. 2014 Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 2 of 2018*

b) A member in full connection in retired relation shall retain the right to be seated, the privilege of the floor and the right to vote in the Annual Conference, but shall be relieved of the right to vote after eight regular annual sessions of the Annual Conference have elapsed from the time that such member has first been placed in retired relation (regardless of any subsequent re-engagement or service) *provided always* that such a member shall have the right to vote if, subsequent to the eighth session, the member is at that time: *Am. 2014*

(1) re-engaged into active service by the Annual Conference pursuant to ¶¶554A and/or 554B; *Am. 2016*

(2) serving as a chairperson of a board of the Annual Conference; and/or

(3) serving as a member of the Annual Conference's Executive Board or Board of Ministry.

c) Affiliate ministerial members shall have the right to vote in the Annual Conference on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of ministerial delegates to the General Conference, and matters of ordination, character and conference relations of ministers. *Am. 2014*

d) Supply pastors under full-time appointment to a church shall have the right to vote in the Annual Conference on all matters *Am. 2014*

except constitutional amendments, election of delegates to the General Conference, and matters of ordination, character and conference relations of clergy.

2. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. The following are *ex-officios* of the Annual Conference: *Am. 2024* *Am. 2020*

a) lay missionaries regularly appointed by the Annual Conference; *Am. 2020*

b) the conference director of youth work (if any);

c) the Methodist representatives from the Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade;

d) the chairpersons of the boards established by that Annual Conference; and

e) diaconal ministers holding assignments. *Am. 2012*

Any *ex-officio* of the Annual Conference under b), c) or d) who is unable to be seated may be replaced by a duly accredited alternate. *Am. 2024*

3. It is the duty of every member and all probationers and approved supply pastors of the Annual Conference to attend and furnish such reports and in such form as *The Book of Discipline* may require. Any such person unable to attend shall report by letter to the secretary of the Annual Conference, setting forth the reason for the absence. Should any minister in active service be absent from the session of the Annual Conference without satisfactory reason, the minister shall be referred by the conference secretary to the Board of Ministry.

4. The lay delegates of the Annual Conference shall participate in all deliberations and vote on all matters, except in matters concerning the granting or validations of licence, ordination, reception into full conference membership, or any question concerning the character and official conduct of ministers. Lay delegates shall serve on all boards except those on ministerial relations and for the trial of ministers. *ed. 2006*

5. When at any time a lay delegate is excused by the Annual Conference from further attendance during the session, the reserve *ed. 2006*

lay delegate may be seated instead. The lay delegate, or reserve, shall report to the local conference the actions of the Annual Conference.

6. The lay delegate, or reserve, shall be seated in a special session of the Annual Conference when convened; provided that no Local Conference shall be deprived of its lay delegate for any reason whatsoever and, if the lay delegate or reserve is unable to attend the special session of the Annual Conference, the Local Conference shall elect another lay member in replacement of such lay delegate. *ed. 2006* *Am. 2004*

7. If the president of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, and the heads of such organisations as the Annual Conference may have designated is absent, the vice-president, or a duly appointed representative shall be seated with the same rights and privileges. *Am. 2008*

¶232A. *Annual Conference Officers.* *Am. 2016*

1. The following Annual Conference officers shall be seated at the Annual Conference and have the privilege of the floor and the right to vote:

a) the president;
b) the vice-president (if any);
c) the conference lay leader;
d) the conference secretary;
e) the chairperson of the Board of Finance; and
f) the conference treasurer.

2. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. The following are *ex-officios* of the Annual Conference: *Am. 2024* *Am. 2020*

a) the conference associate lay leader(s) (if any);
b) the chairperson of the Board of Governance; and
c) the chairperson of all other Annual Conference boards,

provided always that nothing herein shall affect their right to vote by virtue of their being ministers in full connection with voting right or lay delegates of a local church. *Am. 2024*

3. The following Annual Conference officers are not members of the Annual Conference:

a) the conference assistant secretary(ies);

b) the conference assistant treasurer(s) (if any); and

c) the conference statistician,

provided always that nothing herein shall affect their right to be seated, have the privilege of the floor and the right to vote by virtue of their being ministers in full connection or lay delegates representing a local church.

¶232B. *Conference Vice-President.* *ed. 2016 [2013 Ed. ¶232.8]*

1. The Annual Conference may elect a lay person to be the **conference vice-president**.

2. To be eligible for election, a lay person must be a citizen, have been a full member in good standing of The Methodist Church in Singapore for at least ten years and a member for at least four years of a local church connected to the Annual Conference. *Am. 2012 Am. 2004 Am. 2020*

3. The vice-president shall serve for a term of two years and shall be eligible for two consecutive re-elections, and shall upon election, be seated in the Annual Conference with the right to vote. *Am. 2020*

4. The vice-president shall assist the president in the performance of administrative functions and in the absence of the president shall deputise for the president in the same administrative functions.

5. An interim vacancy may be filled by the Annual Conference at the regular session if the vacancy occurs at that time or at the next available session of the Annual Conference.

¶232C. *Conference Lay Leader.* *ed. 2016 [2013 Ed. ¶232.9]*

1. The **conference lay leader** shall be elected by ballot at the Annual Conference session during the year of the General Conference on the nomination of the lay delegates to the Annual Conference session. The conference lay leader shall be eligible for two consecutive re-elections. *Am. 2012*

2. Associate lay leader(s), to work with the conference lay leader, may be elected by the Annual Conference as it may determine.

3. The lay leader and associate lay leader(s) shall hold office for the quadrennium. An interim vacancy shall be filled by the Annual Conference at the regular session if the vacancy occurs at that time or at the next available session of the Annual Conference. *Am. 2012*

4. The conference lay leader shall be seated in each Annual Conference session as a voting member. If the conference lay leader is unable to attend, a conference associate lay leader shall be seated instead. *Am. 2008*

5. The conference lay leader shall:

a) be the chairperson of the conference Board of Laity;

b) be responsible for fostering awareness of the role of the laity both within the congregation and through their ministries in the home, workplace, community and world in achieving the mission of the Church; and

c) enable and support lay participation in the planning and decision-making processes of the Annual Conference, district and local church in cooperation with the president, district superintendents and pastors.

¶233. *Organisation.* 1. The president in consultation with the Executive Board of the Annual Conference and the Council of Presidents shall appoint the time for the holding of the Annual Conference.

2. The Annual Conference or its Executive Board shall select the place for holding the conference; but should it become necessary for any reason to change the place of meeting, a majority of the Executive Board may change the place.

3. A special session of the Annual Conference may be held at such time and in such place as shall be decided by the president and the Executive Board with a three-fourths vote of concurrence. A special session of Annual Conference shall have only such powers as are stated in the call.

4. The president shall preside over the Annual Conference or in case of inability arrange for the bishop or a member of the Council of Presidents to preside. When the president is unable to preside at the Annual Conference or when it would be inappropriate *Am. 2012*

(due to an actual or potential conflict of interests) for the president to preside:

a) the Council of Presidents (excluding the president when the president is unable to be consulted or where the other members of the Council of Presidents deem it is inappropriate to consult the president) shall nominate an elder to preside. Such elder may be the bishop or a president of another Annual Conference within The Methodist Church in Singapore or an elder of that Annual Conference; *Am. 2016* *ed. 2020*

b) in the absence of such a nomination, an elder of that Annual Conference shall be elected to preside *pro tempore* by secret ballot from the floor upon nomination but without debate; and

c) in the absence of such a nomination and until an elder is elected pursuant to b), the elder present having the most seniority in service in that Annual Conference shall preside *pro tempore*.

5. The Annual Conference shall, in the calendar year of the regular session of the General Conference, elect its president, and shall also elect its secretary, treasurer, statistician and the chairpersons and members of the various Annual Conference boards except for the Board of Nominations (¶245), the Board of Appointments (¶271) or as otherwise specified in *The Book of Discipline* and the persons so elected shall serve for the succeeding quadrennium. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2016* *Am. 2016*

¶234. *Powers and Duties.* 1. The Annual Conference for its own government may adopt rules and regulations not in conflict with *The Book of Discipline* of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2020*

2. An Annual Conference shall not financially obligate any organisational unit of The Methodist Church in Singapore except the Annual Conference itself. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2020*

3. The Annual Conference may admit into ministerial membership only those who have met all the Disciplinary requirements for ministerial membership and only in the manner prescribed in *The Book of Discipline*. *Am. 2016*

4. The Annual Conference shall have power to make inquiry into the moral and official conduct of its ministerial members. *Am. 2012*

Subject only to the provisions under ¶¶742–761A, the Annual Conference shall have power to hear complaints against its ministerial members and may try, reprove, suspend, deprive of ministerial office and credentials, expel or acquit any against whom charges may have been preferred. The Annual Conference shall have power to locate a ministerial member for unacceptability or inefficiency.

5. The status of a ministerial member and of a probationer and the manner and conditions of a transfer of a ministerial member from one Annual Conference to another are governed by Chapter 5: The Ministry. *ed.2026*

6. Transfers of itinerant ministers are conditioned on the passing of their character by the Annual Conference to which they are amenable. The official announcement that an itinerant minister is transferred changes the itinerant minister's membership so that all rights and responsibilities in the Annual Conference to which that itinerant minister goes begin from the date of transfer. Such member of an Annual Conference shall not vote twice on the same constitutional question, nor be counted twice in the same year in the basis for election of delegates, nor vote twice in the same year for delegates to the General Conference. *ed. 2006*

7. Whenever a ministerial member, whether on trial or in full connection, is transferred to another Annual Conference, either in connection with a transfer of the pastoral charge to which appointed or by reason of the dissolution or merger of the Annual Conference, the minister shall have the same rights and obligations as the other members of the Annual Conference to which the minister is transferred.

8. The Annual Conference shall have power to make inquiry into the financial status of the local churches, and where there is a deficit of finances may require the minister(s) and the lay delegate(s) to appear before the appropriate committee and make explanation. *ed. 2006*

9. The Annual Conference shall have power to request the Executive Council of the General Conference to make inquiry into

the financial status, in part or in whole, of the General Conference and where the financial status is unsatisfactory may require that appropriate action be taken.

10. The Annual Conference shall have power to make inquiry into the membership status of local churches, and where no members have been received on confession of faith during the year may require the minister(s) and the lay delegate(s) to appear before the Executive Board and make an explanation.

11. The Annual Conference shall give recognition to any new churches that have been organised during the year and shall, through the president and the secretary, send to each new Local Conference a certificate of organisation, which the district superintendent shall on behalf of the conference, present to the new church in an appropriate ceremony. *Am. 2004*

¶235. *Business of the Conference.* 1. The session shall open with a period of devotions, followed by a call of the roll, including the roll of approved supply pastors, and recognise delegates and visitors in such a manner as the Annual Conference may determine.

2. The Annual Conference, to expedite the transaction of its business, may adopt an agenda as a basis of its procedure. Such agenda shall be prepared by the president, the district superintendents, and such others as the Annual Conference may name, and be submitted to the conference for adoption.

3. The business of the Annual Conference shall include the receiving and acting upon reports from the district superintendents, the officers, the standing and special boards and societies, and also making of such inquiries as the president shall recommend by the provision of a supplemental guide.

4. There shall be a Ministerial Session at every regular session of the Annual Conference and at such other times as called by the majority of members of the Ministerial Session or by the president with the concurrence of the district superintendents. The Ministerial Session at the regular session of the Annual Conference shall make inquiry into the moral and official conduct of its ministers. In response to the inquiry whether all ministerial members of the

conference are blameless in their life and official administration, the district superintendent may answer for all the preachers in the district in one answer or the Board of Ministry may make inquiry of each district superintendent about each minister in the district and make one report to the president and the conference in open session. At the conclusion of the examination of the standing of the ministers in the conference or at such later times as the president may designate, the president may call to the bar of the conference the class to be admitted into full connection, and receive them into conference membership after asking questions to be found in *The Book of Discipline*. This examination of the ministers, and the passing of their characters, may be the business of one session.

¶236. *Records and Archives.* 1. The Annual Conference shall keep an exact Record of its proceedings. If there be no archives of the Annual Conference, then the secretary shall keep the bound copy or copies to be handed on to the succeeding secretary.

2. Each Annual Conference shall send to the secretary of the General Conference printed or written copies of its annual journal signed by its president and secretary.

3. The Annual Conference journal shall include the following divisions, preferably in the following order:

a) Officers of Annual Conference.
b) Boards, Rolls of Conference Members.
c) Daily Proceedings.
d) Disciplinary Questions (*see* Appendix).
e) Appointments.
f) Reports as ordered by the Annual Conference.
g) Memoirs as ordered by the Annual Conference.
h) Rolls of Retired and Deceased Ministerial Members.
i) Historical.
j) Miscellaneous.
k) Pastoral Record (including the records of accepted supply pastors in such manner as the Annual Conference may determine).
l) Statistics.
m) Index.

4. An Annual Conference shall include in its journal a list of the missionaries, ministerial and lay, active and retired, who have gone from the Conference into the service of the Church in mission fields.

5. The secretary of each Annual Conference shall keep a service record of all ministerial members of the Annual Conference, together with the date of marriage and the birth dates of the member, spouse and children.

6. All records of secretaries, statisticians and treasurers shall be preserved.

7. In each Annual Conference there shall be a Board of Archives and History, to be appointed or elected in whatever manner the Conference may decide, whose duties it shall be to preserve the records of the Conference, gather all data referring to its organisation, its past history, its former members, and to collect all data of interest and a record of current items of importance to preserve these for future generations.

¶237. *Annual Conference Term of Office.* The term of office in an Annual Conference and Annual Conference agencies, shall (unless otherwise specified in *The Book of Discipline*) be for the Annual Conference quadrennium (¶310.3) beginning immediately after the adjournment of the regular session of the Annual Conference in the year that the General Conference meets in regular session and ending when their successors take office. *Adopted 2012*

¶238. *Resignation.* 1. A person may resign before the expiry of his/her term of office in writing addressed: *Adopted 2012*

a) in the case of an Annual Conference officer or agency chairperson, to the president who shall forthwith inform Executive Board on receipt of such resignation; and

b) in the case of a member of an Annual Conference agency, to the Annual Conference agency chairperson who shall forthwith inform the president and thereafter the management body of that Annual Conference agency.

¶239. *Vacancies.* 1. A vacancy in any of the following Annual Conference offices shall be filled by the Annual Conference at the regular session if the vacancy occurs at that time or at the next *Adopted 2012*

available session of the Annual Conference:

a) the vice-presidency (if any);
b) the conference lay leadership;
c) the conference associate lay leadership (if any);
d) the conference secretaryship;
e) the chairpersonship of the Board of Finance;
f) the Annual Conference treasurership;
g) the Annual Conference assistant treasurership (if any);
h) the chairpersonship and membership of the Board of Nominations (if not filled by office);
i) the chairpersonship and membership of the Board of Presidency; *ed. 2025*
j) the chairpersonship and membership of the Board of Governance; and
k) the chairpersonship of all Annual Conference boards (if not filled by office).

2. Pending a decision by the Annual Conference, the Executive Board may fill any position specified in ¶239.1 on an interim basis.

3. Unless otherwise specified, other vacancies in Annual Conference offices or agency membership may be filled by the Executive Board or, if the Executive Board so allows, by the agency membership itself.

4. A vacancy in the Annual Conference representation in the membership of any General Conference agency shall be filled by the Executive Board in accordance with ¶308.1. *Am. 2016*

CONFERENCE BOARDS

¶241. Unless otherwise stipulated, the Annual Conference shall provide for the connectional relationship between the boards and the district and local church. *ed. 2006*

1. An Annual Conference shall provide for the terms of reference, functions and General Conference connections of all boards and agencies provided by *The Book of Discipline*. *Am. 2008*

2. The Annual Conference shall appoint or elect such *Am. 2008*

quadrennial boards as are required by the conference or *The Book of Discipline* during the year of the General Conference. The powers and duties of these boards shall be prescribed by the conference authorising them or as defined in *The Book of Discipline*. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Executive Board should act in concert with the Board of Finance and/or such other board(s) as relevant with the intent that its boards, committees and/or members should (where appropriate) be designated to oversee key areas of governance and operations under documented terms of reference. *ed. 2009* *Am. 2024*

3. The Annual Conference may from time to time organise additional agencies for the purpose of promoting the work of The Methodist Church in Singapore and may prescribe their membership and their powers and duties. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2020*

4. Unless otherwise specified in *The Book of Discipline*, each Annual Conference may make its boards of such size as its work may require. *Am. 2008*

¶242. *Amenability, Accountability and Voting.* 1. All boards that have been established by Annual Conferences are amenable to the Annual Conference. *Am. 2012*

2. Between sessions of the Annual Conference, boards are accountable to the conference Executive Board.

3. No member, officer, or employee of the Annual Conference or any annual conference agency shall vote on or take part in deliberations on significant matters directly or indirectly affecting his/her business, income or employment, or the business, income, or employment of a member of his/her immediate family. *Adopted 2012 Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 2 of 2018*

Note: Rev. Ed. 2009 ¶243 was deleted in 2012

¶244. *Staff.* Upon the recommendation of a board, the Annual Conference Executive Board may employ or terminate any officer or employee. The Executive Board may delegate its authority in this matter to such body as it thinks fit. *ed. 2006* *Am. 2016*

¶245. 1. There shall be a **Board of Nominations** which shall be elected from the floor in the calendar year preceding the regular session of the General Conference. *ed. 2016*

2. *Membership.* The board shall consist of a chairperson and not fewer than six members with equal lay and ministerial representation, each elected by office or chosen in their personal capacity. The board shall be elected on the floor of the Annual Conference without prior nomination from the previous Board of Nominations. *Am. 2012*

3. The board shall:

a) Nominate suitable persons to serve as officers of the Annual Conference, as representatives of the Annual Conference at the General Conference and its agencies and/or on quadrennial boards of the Annual Conference as provided for in *The Book of Discipline* or as required by the conference. *Am. 2016*

b) Submit its nominations to the Annual Conference, *provided* that nominations from the floor are not denied. *ed. 2009*

¶246. 1. In each Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore there shall be a **conference Executive Board** to execute the decisions of the Annual Conference and coordinate the work of the various boards and agencies. *ed. 2013* *ed. 2020*

2. *Purpose.* The purpose of the Annual Conference Executive Board, as part of the total mission of the Church, is to develop quadrennial and/or annual plans and facilitate the programmes in the Annual Conference. The board shall be responsible for: *Am. 2008*

a) the development, administration, funding and evaluation of the programme of the Annual Conference;

b) encouraging, coordinating and supporting the conference boards, districts and local churches in their ministry and various programmes in accordance with the mission of The Methodist Church in Singapore; and *ed. 2020*

c) discharging the governance responsibilities applicable to the Annual Conference as a registered charity. *Am. 2020*

3. *Membership.* The membership of the Annual Conference Executive Board shall consist of: *Am. 2008*

a) the president of the Annual Conference who shall be chairperson of the board; and *ed. 2016*

b) an equal number of ministerial and lay members with a total *Am. 2012*

membership of not fewer than 11 voting members and not more than 21 voting members which shall include:

(1) the vice-president (if elected); *Am. 2008*

(2) the conference lay leader;

(3) the conference secretary;

(4) the chairperson of the conference Board of Finance (¶251.2a)) who shall be a lay person and shall not serve in such capacity for more than two consecutive quadrennia; *Am. 2008*

(5) the conference president of the Women's Society of Christian Service; and *ed. 2013*

(6) the chairperson of the conference Board of Governance (¶276.2) who shall not serve in that position for more than two consecutive quadrennia and shall not concurrently be the Annual Conference treasurer or the chairperson of the Board of Finance. *Adopted 2008 ed. 2016*

4. *Alternates.* If the Annual Conference so decides, the Annual Conference may elect in addition: *Adopted 2004*

a) not more than three ministers as alternate members of the Executive Board (who shall have voice at all meetings and shall be entitled to vote in the absence of substantive ministerial members, in the order of precedence established by the Annual Conference); and *Adopted 2004*

b) not more than three lay persons as alternate members of the Executive Board (who shall have voice at all meetings and shall be entitled to vote in the absence of substantive lay members, in the order of precedence established by the Annual Conference). *Adopted 2004*

4A. *Employees Disqualified.* No lay person employed by the General Conference, any Annual Conference or any Local Conference or any of their respective agencies shall be eligible to serve as a voting member on the Executive Board. *ed. 2009 Adopted 2008*

4B. Involvement in the day-to-day operations of an Annual Conference (in either a paid or unpaid capacity) shall not prevent a person from being eligible to serve on the Executive Board. For the avoidance of doubt, such person (if serving on the Executive Board) shall be subject to ¶242.3. *Adopted 2012*

5. *Ex-Officios.* District superintendents who are not elected as *Am. 2012*

members, the conference treasurer, the assistant treasurer(s) if any, vice-chairperson(s) of the conference Board of Finance (if any) and chairpersons of Annual Conference Boards shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote.

Am. 2008
Am. 2016
Am. 2024

5A. *Change in Membership Composition.* Any change in the voting membership of the Annual Conference Executive Board shall be notified to the Commissioner of Charities within two weeks of such change or such later time as may be permitted by the Commissioner of Charities.

Am. 2026

6. a) *Officers.* The Executive Board shall elect from its voting membership a vice-chairperson. The secretary of the Annual Conference shall be the recording secretary of the Executive Board unless the Executive Board decides otherwise (in which case, the Executive Board shall elect a recording secretary from among the voting or non-voting members of the Executive Board).

Am. 2012
Am. 2008
Am. 2016

b) *Minutes and Decisions.* The recording secretary shall keep a permanent record of all meetings of the Executive Board and of any decisions reached, whether by circulation or otherwise. Such minutes and record of decisions shall be circulated to all members of the Executive Board as soon as practicable and shall be filed with the secretary of the Annual Conference and with the Board of Finance.

c) *Report of Decisions.* The Executive Board shall make an annual report of its decisions to the Annual Conference at its regular session.

7. *Meetings and Quorum.* It shall convene annually and at such other times as are necessary on call of the chairperson or on written request of one-fifth of the members. A majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.

Am. 2012
ed. 2006

8. a) *Decisions at Meetings.* Unless otherwise provided or the meeting otherwise decides, all decisions shall require a majority vote of all members present and voting.

Am. 2012
ed. 2006
Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 2 of 2018

b) *Decisions Made Between Meetings.* In cases of urgency or where a physical meeting is impracticable, an absolute majority of the voting membership of Executive Board by affirmative vote may make decisions by way of circular resolutions done by regular mail or email provided always that no such decision shall be made where at least one-tenth or three voting members (whichever is the lesser) of the voting membership indicate a preference for a physical meeting. All such decisions shall be duly reported at the next meeting of the Executive Board.

9. It may incur expense necessary to the performance of its functions, subject to such budgetary control as may be specified by the Annual Conference. *ed. 2006* *Am. 2016*

¶251. 1. Each Annual Conference shall, in the calendar year of the regular session of the General Conference, elect a **Board of Finance**. Nominations from the Board of Nominations shall be permitted provided that nominations from the floor shall not be denied. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2016*

2. The Board of Finance shall comprise:

a) a chairperson (¶246.3b)(4)) who shall be a lay person who is not an employee of the General Conference, the Annual Conference or any of its Local Conferences or any of their respective agencies, and shall not serve in that position for more than two consecutive quadrennia; *Am. 2012* *Am. 2008* *ed. 2016* *Am. 2016*

b) five ministers; and *[2013 Ed. ¶246.3b)(4)]*

c) not less than five nor more than 11 lay members including the vice-president (if elected), the conference lay leader and at least two women (one of whom shall be the treasurer of Conference Women's Society of Christian Service or her representative). *Am. 2024*

2A. The president of the Annual Conference, the president of the Women's Society of Christian Service, the conference treasurer, the assistant treasurer(s), if any, the district superintendents and the chairpersons of the Finance Committee of local churches shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and *ed. 2016* *Am. 2024* *Am. 2008* *ed. 2016* *Am. 2016* *Am. 2024*

participate in meetings without the right to vote.

3. Their term of office shall begin with the adjournment of the said conference session and they shall serve for the quadrennium and until their successors shall have been chosen. Any vacancy shall be filled by the board until the next conference session, at which time the Annual Conference shall fill the vacancy.

4. The board shall elect one or more vice-chairperson(s) who shall be lay person(s) who is or are not employee(s) of the General Conference, the Annual Conference or any of its Local Conferences or any of their respective agencies. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2008*

5. The board shall elect a recording secretary from its members or otherwise. If not a member, the recording secretary shall have right of voice without vote. *Adopted 2012*

6. *Minutes and Decisions.* The recording secretary shall keep a permanent record of all meetings of the Board of Finance and of any decisions reached, whether by circulation or otherwise. Such minutes and record of decisions shall be circulated to all members of the Board of Finance as soon as practicable and shall be filed with the recording secretary of the Executive Board. *Am. 2016*

7. *Report of Decisions.* The Board of Finance shall make regular reports of its decisions to the Executive Board. *Am. 2016*

8. *Meetings and Quorum.* It shall convene annually and at such other times as are necessary on call of the chairperson or on written request of one-fifth of the members. A majority of voting members shall constitute a quorum. *Am. 2016*

9. a) *Decisions at Meetings.* Unless otherwise provided or the meeting otherwise decides, all decisions shall require a majority vote of all members present and voting. *Am. 2016*

b) *Decisions Made Between Meetings.* In cases of urgency or where a physical meeting is impracticable, an absolute majority of the voting membership of the Board of Finance by affirmative vote may make decisions by way of circular resolutions done by regular mail or email provided always that no such decision shall be made where at least one-tenth or three voting members (whichever is the lesser) of the voting membership indicate a preference for a

physical meeting. All such decisions shall be duly reported at the next meeting of the Board of Finance.

10. Although physical meetings are to be preferred and the default mode for such meetings, in addition to being able to make decisions in cases of urgency or where a physical meeting is impracticable pursuant to ¶251.9b), the Board of Finance may make alternative arrangements to meet by electronic means subject to having received the approval of the Executive Board and subject to such conditions as the Executive Board may impose. *Am. 2024*

¶252. 1. The Annual Conference treasurer and (where the Annual Conference thinks appropriate) assistant treasurer(s) who shall be lay persons who are not employees of the General Conference, the Annual Conference or any of its Local Conferences or any of their respective agencies shall be elected by the Annual Conference in the calendar year of the regular session of the General Conference, having been nominated by the outgoing Board of Finance but provided that nominations from the floor shall not be denied. It is preferable but not mandatory that the treasurer has relevant accounting qualifications or appropriate financial literacy or appropriate practical experience. The treasurer shall serve for the quadrennium or until a successor is elected *provided* always that no person shall serve as treasurer for more than two consecutive quadrennia. If a vacancy should occur during the quadrennium the board shall fill the vacancy until the next session of the Annual Conference. The accounts for the preceding financial year shall be audited by a certified public accountant before each session of the Annual Conference and be presented to the conference for its acceptance. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2008* *ed. 2016* *Am. 2016*

2. It shall be the responsibility of the conference treasurer to make regular remittances to the General Conference treasurer of the sum apportioned for the General Conference budget.

3. All persons authorised to endorse financial and legal documents shall be covered by an appropriate fidelity insurance policy.

¶253. 1. The Board of Finance shall prepare the annual budget

for presentation to and acceptance by the Annual Conference.

2. *Responsibilities.* The board shall: *ed. 2016*

a) secure full information regarding all conference needs and programmes. The board shall draft the annual budget of the Executive Board; all other conference boards and organisations or their duly authorised representatives shall have opportunity to represent their askings before the board; *Am. 2016 [2013 Ed. ¶246.9]*

b) furnish sufficient and equitable support for the president of the Annual Conference, including salary, housing, travel and office expenses (where applicable);

c) include such apportionments from the General Conference treasurer for such items as have been approved by the General Conference;

d) recommend to the Annual Conference for its action and determination the apportionments to the local churches of the Conference, using such methods as it may determine, unless the Annual Conference shall have determined the method of distribution to the local churches. The local church treasurer shall make regular monthly proportionate remittances to the Annual Conference treasurer;

e) (unless the Annual Conference has established a separate board for human resource and personnel matters) have responsibility for overseeing human resource and personnel policies as approved by the Executive Board for employees and others; *Adopted 2008*

f) develop policies governing the giving of loans and donations to any related or unrelated parties or individuals (including employees) for approval by the Executive Board and to oversee the implementation of the same; and *Adopted 2008*

g) ensure that the Annual Conference financial manual is in place and reviewed regularly. *Adopted 2008*

¶254. The Annual Conference may constitute a conference treasury as a depository for funds designated for any or all conference boards and agencies obviating the necessity of a treasurer for each board or agency.

¶255. The Board of Finance shall cooperate with the General Conference Executive Council in promoting the standardisation of the financial system in the local churches of the conference and the adoption of common procedures for the submission of returns and accounts to the governmental authorities through the Methodist Headquarters. *ed. 2006*

¶256. No Annual Conference board or agency shall make a special conference-wide appeal to the local churches for funds without the approval of the Annual Conference Executive Board.

¶257. When application is made to the Annual Conference Executive Board for the privilege of a special conference-wide appeal, the application shall be referred to the Board of Finance which shall investigate the application and its possible relation to the other obligations of the conference, and in the light of facts make recommendations to the Annual Conference Executive Board for its action and determination. *Am.2016*

¶258. *Ministerial Support.* Assumption of the obligations of the itinerancy required to be made at the time of admission into the travelling connection places upon the Church (the Annual Conference and the local churches) the corresponding obligation of providing support for the entire ministry of the Church (i.e. the Annual Conference). *Am. 2016*

¶259. Each Annual Conference shall determine what plan and method shall be employed in distributing the apportionments to its local churches for the support of the president and pastors.

¶260. *Salary Plan.* 1. Each Annual Conference shall adopt a salary plan for pastors.

2. It shall first be carefully studied by the Board of Finance who shall take into consideration the needs of the conference for ministerial support, the financial resources of the conference and its local churches, and after approval of the Executive Board, present it to the conference for adoption.

3. The Annual Conference may adopt it by a two-thirds majority vote.

4. The salary scale shall provide an established salary

schedule and appropriate fringe benefits for the support to the active itinerants and supply pastors giving their full time to the ministry of the church. The decision of the Conference shall be binding on all local churches.

5. On recommendation of the Board of Finance, the salary plan may be changed from time to time by a two-thirds majority of the Annual Conference.

6. The Board of Finance shall administer the salary plan.

¶261. In the event the Annual Conference does not administer a pastor's salary plan, it shall be the responsibility of each Local Conference to determine the pastors' salaries, provided that they shall be guided by a minimum or basic salary scale adopted by the Annual Conference.

¶262. *Pensions and Other Retirement Benefits.* 1. All ministers and full-time church workers shall be required to make a regular monthly contribution to the Central Provident Fund.

2. It shall be an obligation on all Annual Conferences, local churches, agencies and institutions to make the respective employer's monthly payments to the Central Provident Fund in respect of the ministers or full-time church workers serving these churches, agencies and institutions. *Am. 2016*

3. Retired ministers, their dependents and full-time church workers who have enjoyed the benefits of other approved pension schemes before 1 January 1971 shall continue to do so.

4. Ministers and full-time church workers who served the church prior to 1 January 1971 shall enjoy the benefits of the pension scheme for the period of such service upon retirement, in addition to the benefits of their membership in the Central Provident Fund scheme.

¶271. The Annual Conference shall have a **Board of Appointments** comprising the president as chairperson, the vice-president (if any), the district superintendents, the conference lay leader and the chairperson of the Board of Finance. The president shall consult the Board of Appointments when making appointments of ministers to charges and/or other fields of labour *Am. 2012* *Am. 2016*

and conference workers to their fields of labour.

¶272. 1. Each Annual Conference shall, in the year of the General Conference, elect for a term of four years a **Board of Ministry**, consisting of not fewer than six nor more than 25 ministers in full connection in their Annual Conferences, nominated by the president after consultation with the chairperson of the board of the previous quadrennium, or with a committee of the board, and with the Executive Board provided that nominations from the floor shall not be denied. Vacancies shall be filled by the president after consultation with the chairperson of the board and, if deemed necessary by the president with the concurrence of the Council of Presidents, such vacancies may be filled by Ministers in full connection with other Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2006* *Am. 2016* *ed. 2020*

2. The board shall organise itself by electing from its membership a chairperson, a registrar and such other officers as it may deem necessary.

3. The board shall convene at the seat and time of the Annual Conference, preferably the day before the session opens, to review and complete the work of the past year and to plan for the future, and at such other times during the conference year as its work may require.

4. *Amenability*. The board shall be amenable to the Annual Conference for its actions.

5. The Board of Ministry shall cooperate and be amenable to the Annual Conference in all matters relating to the development and promotion of programmes for local churches. It shall cooperate with the Annual Conference Executive Board in order that its programme emphasis may be integrated into the total unified programme of the board. It shall promote the total programme of the church or aspects of it which are particularly related to the board as it may be directed by the Executive Board. Field work plans which relate to the promotion of programme in the Annual Conference or the Local Church shall be cleared through the Executive Board.

6. *Responsibilities.* The Board of Ministry shall:

a) study problems of ministerial supply in the Annual Conference and to cooperate with the district superintendents and ministers of the conference, in every effort to enlist suitable persons for the Christian ministry, to list all persons who have declared their purpose to prepare for the Christian ministry as ministerial students, and to provide contact with and counsel for all ministerial students while in preparation for the ministry;

b) urge and encourage in every practical way to all ministerial students to attend theological schools of The Methodist Church in Singapore, to complete the course leading to the Bachelor of Divinity or equivalent degree, and to guide and counsel them in this course; *ed. 2020*

c) receive annual reports on the progress made by each ministerial student enrolled in a theological school and to record credit for work satisfactorily completed;

d) guide the ministerial candidate who is not enrolled in a theological school and who is pursuing a course of study;

e) administer the programme of recruiting and training, and in maintaining its standards of the ministry;

f) inquire into the education and spiritual qualifications of each candidate for the ministry;

g) examine each candidate to be advanced to membership in the Annual Conference and to orders, and each minister from another church seeking admission into our fellowship, according to the provisions of *The Book of Discipline*, and report its recommendations to the Annual Conference;

h) cooperate with conference agencies in providing guidance in the continuing education of ministers;

i) study matters pertaining to the status and relationships of ministers to the Annual Conference and to interpret the high ethical standards of the ministry set forth in *The Book of Discipline*;

j) make recommendation to the Annual Conference concerning all proposed changes in the conference relation of elders in full connection, including: (1) changes from effective relation to

retirement, the superannuate and supernumerary relations, disability leave, sabbatical leave, appointment as a student and location; (2) return to effective relation, from another relation; and (3) readmission of those formerly located. The board shall report to the Annual Conference all transfers into or out of the conference, withdrawals and other changes in conference relations;

k) examine all applicants for employment as approved supply pastors and for admission on trial as to their fitness for the ministry, and shall make full inquiry as to the fitness of candidates for admission to full connection. This must include an examination as to character, habits of life, conversion, call to ministry, Christian experience, evangelistic and missionary concern, age, educational qualifications, domestic situation, cooperation with others, ability to lead a service of worship and understanding of the church's mission (the answers to the examination questions may be submitted in writing);

l) report recommendations concerning: (1) candidates for the diaconal ministry; (2) candidates for the office of deacon; (3) candidates for ordination as elders; (4) those to be received from other churches; (5) those to be transferred into the Annual Conference; and (6) students, not yet elders in full connection, to be appointed to attend school and assigned to a Local Conference; and *Am. 2016 ed. 2016*

m) certify all information and recommendations concerning each candidate to the Annual Conference in duplicate. One copy of this record is to be kept by the registrar of the board.

7. In all cases involving discontinuance of membership or trial or termination of approved supply pastor status, the board shall file with the office of the president for permanent record a copy of the circumstances related thereto.

8. The board shall urge all members on trial to attend schools of theology related to The Methodist Church in Singapore, or credited or approved by The Methodist Church in Singapore, and shall encourage and assist them in every practicable way to complete the preparation recommended. It shall require and assist *ed. 2020 ed. 2020*

all who are not attending an approved school of theology to pursue promptly the courses of study.

9. The board shall issue or renew local preachers' licences subject to the provisions of ¶¶504–506. *ed. 2006*

10. **The registrar of the Board of Ministry** shall keep:

a) a full personnel record, including transcript of academic credit, for all ministerial candidates within the bounds of the Annual Conference;

b) a permanent record of the standing of the students in the course of study, and report to the Annual Conference when required. This record shall include the credits allowed students for work done in accredited schools of theology, in approved schools, in approved courses of study and by correspondence; and

c) a record of the educational history and interests of each minister serving in the Annual Conference. This material shall be furnished to the board by active ministers. Such records are the property of the Annual Conference and shall be carefully preserved.

¶273. There shall be a **Board of Laity** elected by the Annual Conference in the calendar year of the General Conference.

1. *Membership.* The membership of the board shall comprise:

a) the conference lay leader;

b) associate conference lay leader(s); *Am. 2008*

c) the lay leaders of local churches; and *ed. 2013*

d) five other lay members. *ed. 2013*

1A. The vice-president of the Annual Conference and the president of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service or her representative shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. *Am. 2004* *Am. 2024* *Am. 2024*

2. *Officers.* The conference lay leader and the associate conference lay leader(s) shall be the chairperson and vice-chairperson(s) of the board respectively. The board shall elect a secretary and such other officers as it may deem necessary. All officers and elected board members shall serve during the ensuing *Am. 2008*

quadrennium. Any vacancies that occur in these offices shall be filled by the board.

3. *Meetings.* The board shall meet at least twice a year and at such other times as are necessary on the call of the chairperson.

4. *Finance.* The work of the board shall be financed by the Annual Conference. The board, through its officers, shall prepare a budget for the carrying on of its programme for the coming year, and submit it to the Board of Finance for inclusion in the Annual Conference budget.

5. *Functions.* The board shall promote a programme of lay work. It shall be charged with leadership for the development of the several major areas of the work of the laity in the conference, and shall use suitable means to promote an effective programme, to cooperate with other conference agencies in the lay work to the end that every available resource may be provided to help each local church carry on an effective programme of lay work.

¶274. *Programme Boards.* 1. Each Annual Conference shall organise in the calendar year of the General Conference, programme boards to:

a) develop and promote a conference programme which will provide guidance and help for local churches;

b) cooperate with other conference boards in matters of common interest; and

c) provide training at conference level where applicable.

2. The following quadrennial programme boards may be established:

a) Board of Discipleship and Nurture.

b) Board of Missions.

c) Board of Outreach and Social Concerns.

d) Board of Witness and Evangelism.

e) Board of Worship and Music.

¶275. 1. For the quadrennium, the Annual Conference shall have a **Board of Presidency**. The board shall comprise two ministerial members and two lay persons elected by the Annual Conference and a fifth person (who may be either a minister or lay

Am. 2012
Am. 2016

person) who shall be nominated by the incoming president or (if the incoming president declines to so nominate) elected by the Annual Conference by nomination from the floor and without nomination by the Board of Nominations.

2. The Board of Presidency shall review the work and administration of the President and report to the Annual Conference or the Executive Board as it may deem appropriate within its constitutional warrant of power. If the need arises, the Board of Presidency shall exercise the responsibilities set out in ¶587. *Am. 2016* *ed. 2017*

3. The members of the Board of Presidency shall be elected by the Annual Conference after the election of the incoming President and the naming of his nominee (if any) under ¶275.1 has been made. The nominations of the Board of Nominations to the Board of Presidency (except that the Board of Nominations shall make no nomination of the fifth member if the incoming President declines to nominate that person) shall be made known at this time, provided always that nominations from the floor are not denied. *Am. 2012* *Adopted 2004* *Am. 2016*

4. The Board of Presidency shall elect its own chairperson and secretary. *Adopted 2004*

¶276. 1. The Annual Conference shall elect a **Board of Governance** comprising a chairperson together with not less than two and not more than six lay persons who shall be the other members of the conference Board of Governance. *Adopted 2008* *Am. 2016*

2. The **conference Board of Governance** chairperson (¶246.3b)(6)) shall be a lay person elected at the Annual Conference session during the year of the regular session of the General Conference on the nomination of the Board of Nominations. The chairperson shall not serve in that position for more than two consecutive quadrennia and shall not concurrently be the treasurer or the Board of Finance chairperson. *Am. 2016 [2013 Ed. ¶232.10]*

3. The terms of reference of the Board of Governance should be approved by the Annual Conference and documented in the Annual Conference journal. Such terms of reference may include the responsibility to: *ed. 2016* *ed. 2026*

a) review the audit plans of the external auditors; *Adopted 2008*

b) review the external auditors' reports on the financial statements and their management letter on internal controls; *Adopted 2008*

c) review the cooperation given by staff to the external auditors; *Adopted 2008*

d) review, to the extent feasible, the adequacy of internal controls and the scope and results of the internal audit procedures (if any); *Adopted 2008*

e) nominate external auditors for appointment by Annual Conference; *Adopted 2008*

f) review compliance with such functions and duties as may be required under the relevant statutes or the Charities Act, and by such amendments made thereto from time to time; *Adopted 2008*

g) review interested person transactions and procedures on awarding contracts to interested parties, if any; *Adopted 2008*

h) review the remuneration packages of employees who are related to Executive Board members, if any; *Adopted 2008*

i) review the financial manual for adoption by the Annual Conference and monitor compliance thereof; *Adopted 2008*

j) investigate matters in its terms of reference, and shall have access to and have the cooperation of employees and the Executive Board. The Board of Governance shall have the discretion to invite Executive Board members or employees to attend its meetings, as well as to requisition reasonable resources to enable it to discharge its functions effectively; *Adopted 2008*

k) review the appropriateness of the financial reserves policy (if any); *Adopted 2008*

l) facilitate the work of Local Church Governance Committees; and *Adopted 2012*

m) consult the Council of Governance in promoting appropriate governance standards within The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Adopted 2012 ed. 2020*

Section V. District Conference

¶280. A District Conference shall be held if directed by the Annual Conference of which it is a part and may be held upon the

call of the district superintendent, which call shall specify the time and place.

1. A District Conference shall be composed of members as determined and specified by the Annual Conference.

2. The District Conference may choose its own order of business. The secretary duly elected shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings and submit it to the Annual Conference for examination.

3. The District Conference may develop and adopt a plan and set goals for the next year's work. *Am. 2016 ed. 2016*

Chapter Three
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

Section I. General Provisions

¶301. The term "agency," wherever it appears in *The Book of Discipline*, is a term used to describe any council, commission, board, committee, society, body corporate or any other unit (howsoever named and/or constituted) at the various levels of church organisation (General, Annual, District and Local Conferences). *Am. 2012 Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 1 of 2016*

¶301A. No agency shall be organised and/or constituted except under or pursuant to authority granted by *The Book of Discipline*. *Adopted 2012*

¶301B. An agency shall only be dissolved (or otherwise terminated) by or, with consent of, the relevant church organisation (General, Annual, District or Local Conference as the case may be) which organised or constituted it. Unless otherwise provided, upon the dissolution or termination of an agency, the assets and liabilities of such agency shall be dealt with in such manner as may be determined by the relevant church organisation (General, Annual, District or Local Conference as the case may be) which organised or constituted it. *Adopted 2012*

¶302. *Amenability and Programme Accountability: General Conference.* 1. All agencies of The Methodist Church in Singapore organised by authority of the General Conference or under the direction of the General Conference ("General Conference agencies") are amenable to the General Conference and their terms of reference shall be approved by the General Conference and documented. *Am. 2012 Am. 2008 ed. 2020*

2. Between sessions of the General Conference, all General Conference agencies and all other agencies amenable to the General Conference shall be accountable to the General Conference Executive Council and report to the Finance and Administration Council for matters of finance. General Conference agencies are *Am. 2012 Am. 2004*

created by the General Conference to carry out assigned functions of programme, administration and/or service.

3. Evaluation of General Conference agencies and all other agencies amenable to the General Conference by the General Conference Executive Council shall be part of the accountability relationship. The evaluation process and its results shall be reported to each General Conference. The purpose for evaluation is to assist the General Conference agency in the process of fulfilling and supporting its ministry. *Am. 2012*

4. In all matters of accountability, episcopal oversight is assumed.

¶303. *Amenability and Programme Accountability: Annual Conference.* 1. All agencies of The Methodist Church in Singapore organised by authority of an Annual Conference or under the direction of an Annual Conference are amenable to that Annual Conference and their terms of reference shall be approved by that Annual Conference and documented. *ed. 2020 Am. 2012 Adopted 2008*

2. Between sessions of the Annual Conference, all agencies shall be accountable to the Executive Board and report to the Board of Finance for matters of finance. These agencies are created by the Annual Conference to carry out assigned functions of programme, administration and/or service. *Adopted 2008*

3. Evaluation of agencies by the Executive Board shall be part of the accountability relationship. The evaluation process and its results shall be reported to each Annual Conference. The purpose for evaluation is to assist the agency in the process of fulfilling and supporting its ministry. *Adopted 2008*

4. In all matters of accountability, presidential oversight is assumed. *Adopted 2008*

¶304. *Amenability and Programme Accountability: Local Conference.* 1. All agencies of The Methodist Church in Singapore organised by authority of a Local Conference or under the direction of a Local Conference are amenable to that Local Conference and their terms of reference shall be approved by the Local Conference and documented. *Am. 2012 Adopted 2008 ed. 2020*

2. Between sessions of the Local Conference, all agencies shall be accountable to the Local Church Executive Committee and report to the Finance Committee for matters of finance. These agencies are created by the Local Conference to carry out assigned functions of programme, administration and/or service. *Adopted 2008*

3. Evaluation of agencies by the Local Church Executive Committee shall be part of the accountability relationship. The evaluation process and its results shall be reported to each Local Conference. The purpose for evaluation is to assist the agency in the process of fulfilling and supporting its ministry. *Adopted 2008*

4. In all matters of accountability, pastoral oversight is assumed. *Adopted 2008*

¶305. *Membership.* 1. Unless otherwise specified, all provisions pertaining to the nomination and election of members of agency management bodies shall take effect immediately upon enactment. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2008*

2. Save where the membership of an agency management body is prescribed by reference to office holders and/or circumscribed in number in *The Book of Discipline* or relevant constitutional document of the agency, additional members may be co-opted by each agency management body in order to bring in persons with special knowledge or background which will aid in the work of the agency provided always that the total number of co-opted members shall not exceed one-half of the total number of members of the agency management body. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2008* *Am. 2020*

¶306. *Meetings.* 1. The management body of every agency shall meet, organise and conduct such business as may properly come before it as promptly as feasible following the election of its members. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2009*

2. Unless otherwise specified in *The Book of Discipline* or relevant church organisations which organised or constituted it, the management body of every agency shall continue in responsibility until its successor council, board, commission or committee is organised or constituted. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2009*

3. Proceedings and decisions of meetings should be minuted *Am. 2012*

and circulated to the whole membership of the meeting (including reserves or alternates) as soon as practicable. *Adopted 2008*

4. Unless otherwise specified in *The Book of Discipline*, the quorum required for a meeting shall be at least one-third of the voting membership. *Adopted 2008*

5. In cases of urgency or where a physical meeting is impracticable, an absolute majority of the voting membership of an agency by affirmative vote may make decisions by way of circular resolutions done by regular mail or email provided always that no such decision shall be made where at least one-tenth or three voting members (whichever is lesser) of the voting membership indicated a preference for a physical meeting. All such decisions shall be duly reported at the next meeting of the agency. *Adopted 2012 ed. 2020*

¶306A. *Permitted Alternatives to Physical Meetings of Plenary Bodies.* *Adopted July 2020 Am. 2024 Amended 2021 Am. 2024*

1. *Applicability.* Although physical meetings are to be preferred and the default mode for such meetings, subject to compliance with this ¶306A, the following alternative arrangements may apply to the regular and/or special sessions of the General Conference, the Annual Conferences and the Local Conferences despite anything to the contrary in *The Book of Discipline*.

2. *Interpretation.* In this ¶306A:

"electronic means" shall mean electronic communication, video conferencing, tele-conferencing or other electronic means.

"governing body" shall mean:

a) in respect of the General Conference, the General Conference Executive Council;

b) in respect of an Annual Conference, its Executive Board; and

c) in respect of a Local Conference, its Local Church Executive Committee.

3. Under these alternative arrangements, the relevant regular and/or special sessions of the General Conference, the Annual Conferences and the Local Conferences may be convened, held and/or conducted at the same time or times: *Am. 2024*

a) at one or more than one places; and/or

b) wholly or partially by electronic means,

but provided always that every delegate or other person entitled to attend and speak at such a session is, if such person so desires, allowed reasonable opportunity to participate in the proceedings by electronic means from such place or places as shall be specified for the purpose in contemporaneous communication with one another.

4. These alternative arrangements may be permitted if they have been authorised by the relevant governing body by an absolute majority of the voting membership of the relevant governing body evidenced by affirmative vote in support of one or more resolutions at a physical meeting or as otherwise authorised (including by way of circular resolution(s) done by regular mail or email), provided always that such resolution(s) shall state the good and sufficient reason(s) why it is the opinion of the relevant governing body that it considers that the alternative arrangements should apply. *Am. 2024*

5. In addition, the relevant governing body shall, from time to time, specify (and/or designate such person(s) as it thinks fit to identify – by office and/or by name – to so specify) detailed arrangements for convening, holding and/or conducting the relevant regular and/or special sessions including: *Am. 2024*

a) the period of notice for such sessions, which shall not be less than seven days;

b) the place and/or places where such sessions shall be convened to meet and where each of the delegates or other persons entitled to attend shall assemble, if meeting physically (wholly or partially) shall be permitted;

c) the electronic platform(s) at which such sessions may be located in respect of all and/or each of the delegates or other persons entitled to attend, if meeting by electronic means (wholly or partially) shall be permitted;

d) how a quorum may be established (wholly or partially) by physical presence and/or by electronic means;

e) the methods and processes by which participation in the proceedings of the sessions (wholly or partially) by physical

presence and/or by electronic means may be provided, including prior registration requirements;

f) how voting by electronic means may be conducted;

g) how voting by proxy may be conducted, including as to who may be appointed as the proxy;

h) how questions may be tabled for discussion in writing and/or by electronic means;

i) how responses to questions tabled for discussion may be communicated in writing and/or by electronic means;

j) how notices for a session, proxies, and/or circulars and other documents to be circulated may be given by electronic means;

k) how notices for a meeting to supersede any previous notice may be given;

l) how a session may be deferred; and

m) all other matters as the relevant governing body (and/or the person(s) so designated) consider(s) necessary or expedient for the smooth and effective holding of the sessions.

6. A session convened, held, conducted or deferred substantially in accordance with the arrangements so specified by the relevant governing body (and/or the person(s) so designated) is deemed to satisfy the requirements relating to the convening, holding, conduct or deferral of the relevant session under *The Book of Discipline* despite anything to the contrary therein and notwithstanding any intermittent failure in electronic means to facilitate contemporaneous communication. *Am. 2024*

7. Any notice, form, circular or other document given or sent in accordance with the arrangements specified by the relevant governing body (and/or the person(s) so designated) is deemed to satisfy the requirements relating to the same under *The Book of Discipline* despite anything to the contrary therein and notwithstanding any inadvertent failure in giving or sending any such notice, form, circular or other document to any person(s). *Am. 2024*

¶306B. *Permitted Alternatives to Physical Meetings of Governing Bodies.* *Am. 2024*

1. *Applicability.* Although physical meetings are to be

preferred and the default mode for such meetings, subject to compliance with this ¶306B, the following alternative arrangements may apply to the regular and/or special meetings of the governing bodies as identified herein despite anything to the contrary in *The Book of Discipline*.

2. *Interpretation.* In this ¶306B:

"electronic means" shall mean electronic communication, video conferencing, tele-conferencing or other electronic means.

"governing body" shall mean:

a) in respect of the General Conference, the General Conference Executive Council;

b) in respect of an Annual Conference, its Executive Board; and

c) in respect of a Local Conference, its Local Church Executive Committee.

3. Under these alternative arrangements, meetings of the relevant governing body may be convened, held and/or conducted at the same time or times:

a) at one or more than one places; and/or

b) wholly or partially by electronic means,

but provided always that every member or other person entitled to attend and speak at such a meeting is, if such person so desires, allowed reasonable opportunity to participate in the proceedings by electronic means from such place or places as shall be specified for the purpose in contemporaneous communication with one another.

4. These alternative arrangements may be permitted if they have been authorised by the relevant governing body for itself by way of an absolute majority of the voting membership of the relevant governing body evidenced by affirmative vote in support of one or more resolutions at a physical meeting or as otherwise authorised (including by way of circular resolution(s) done by regular mail or email), provided always that such resolution(s) shall state the good and sufficient reason(s) why it is the opinion of the relevant governing body that it considers that the alternative arrangements should apply and provided always that:

a) the aforesaid resolution(s) shall specify if these

arrangements are to a specific meeting or, if more than one meeting, state which meetings but so that these arrangements do not extend to meetings beyond the current term of the relevant governing body;

b) in the case of the General Conference Executive Council, the resolution(s) shall be brought to the attention of the next available regular and/or special session of the General Conference, which may resolve that the resolution(s) shall cease to have prospective effect;

c) in the case of the Executive Board of an Annual Conference, the resolution(s) shall be brought to the attention of the next available regular and/or special session of that Annual Conference, which may resolve that the resolution(s) shall cease to have prospective effect; and

d) in the case of the Local Church Executive Committee of a Local Conference, the resolution(s) shall be brought to the attention of the District Superintendent forthwith upon being passed and to the attention of the next available regular and/or special session of that Local Conference, which may resolve that the resolution(s) shall cease to have prospective effect.

5. In addition, the relevant governing body shall, from time to time, specify (and/or designate such person(s) as it thinks fit to identify – by office and/or by name – to so specify) detailed arrangements for convening, holding and/or conducting the relevant regular and/or special sessions including:

a) the period of notice for such meetings, which shall not be less than seven days;

b) the place and/or places where such meetings shall be convened to meet and where each of the members or other persons entitled to attend shall assemble, if meeting physically (wholly or partially) shall be permitted;

c) the electronic platform(s) at which such meetings may be located in respect of all and/or each of the members or other persons entitled to attend, if meeting by electronic means (wholly or partially) shall be permitted;

d) how a quorum may be established (wholly or partially) by

physical presence and/or by electronic means;

e) the methods and processes by which participation in the proceedings of the meetings (wholly or partially) by physical presence and/or by electronic means may be provided, including prior registration requirements;

f) how voting by electronic means may be conducted;

g) how voting by proxy may be conducted, including as to who may be appointed as the proxy;

h) how questions may be tabled for discussion in writing and/or by electronic means;

i) how responses to questions tabled for discussion may be communicated in writing and/or by electronic means;

j) how notices for a meeting, proxies, and/or circulars and other documents to be circulated may be given by electronic means;

k) how notices for a meeting to supersede any previous notice may be given;

l) how a meeting may be deferred; and

m) all other matters as the relevant governing body (and/or the person(s) so designated) consider(s) necessary or expedient for the smooth and effective holding of the meetings.

6. A meeting convened, held, conducted or deferred substantially in accordance with the arrangements so specified by the relevant governing body (and/or the person(s) so designated) is deemed to satisfy the requirements relating to the convening, holding, conduct or deferral of the relevant meeting under *The Book of Discipline* despite anything to the contrary therein and notwithstanding any intermittent failure in electronic means to facilitate contemporaneous communication.

7. Any notice, form, circular or other document given or sent in accordance with the arrangements specified by the relevant governing body (and/or the person(s) so designated) is deemed to satisfy the requirements relating to the same under *The Book of Discipline* despite anything to the contrary therein and notwithstanding any inadvertent failure in giving or sending any such notice, form, circular or other document to any person(s).

8. Nothing in this ¶306B shall be construed to discourage physical meetings of the governing bodies nor to disallow other methods of decision-making as otherwise permitted by *The Book of Discipline*.

¶307. *Organisation.* 1. Unless otherwise specified, each agency shall elect one or more vice-chairpersons from the voting membership of the agency, and a secretary and such other officers as it deems appropriate. *ed. 2016 Am. 2012 ed. 2009*

2. The term of office of an office-bearer in the General Conference and General Conference agencies, shall (unless otherwise specified in *The Book of Discipline*) be for the General Conference quadrennium beginning immediately after the adjournment of the Conference where the relevant office-bearer is elected and ending when the successor of the relevant office-bearer takes office. An office-bearer may resign before the expiry of his/her term of office in writing addressed: *Am. 2012 ed. 2008 Am. 2004*

a) in the case of an agency chairperson, to the bishop (for General Conference agencies) who shall forthwith inform the General Conference Executive Council on receipt of such resignation; and *Am. 2012 Am. 2008*

b) in the case of a member of a General Conference agency, to the General Conference agency chairperson who shall forthwith inform the bishop and thereafter the management body of that General Conference agency and, where the member is an Annual Conference representative, the Executive Board of the relevant Annual Conference. *Am. 2012 ed. 2009 Am. 2004*

3. No member, officer or employee of any agency shall vote on or take part in deliberations on significant matters directly or indirectly affecting his/her business, income or employment, or the business, income or employment of a member of his/her immediate family. *Am. 2012 ed. 2009*

4. If any ministerial member of an agency who was elected to represent a certain Annual Conference ceases to be a member of that Annual Conference, or if any lay member so elected transfers membership to a church outside the bounds of that conference, that *ed. 2009*

member's place shall automatically become vacant.

5. If a member of an agency is absent from three consecutive regular meetings without a reason acceptable to the agency, that person shall cease to be a member thereof. In that case that person shall be so notified, and that place may thereafter be filled in accordance with the appropriate provisions of *The Book of Discipline*. *Am. 2012 ed. 2009*

6. When the bishop or a president is unable to attend a meeting of an agency of which that bishop or president is a member, that bishop or president may name another person to attend that meeting with the privilege of vote if the bishop or president has the right to vote. *Am. 2020*

7. Each agency should establish documented procedures for agency members and employees to declare actual or potential conflicts of interest to the agency at the earliest available opportunity. *Adopted 2008*

¶308. *Vacancies.* 1. Unless otherwise specified, vacancies within the membership of any General Conference agency occurring during the quadrennium shall be filled as follows: a vacancy of agency chairperson shall be filled by the General Conference Executive Council; a vacancy in Annual Conference representation shall be filled by the Executive Board of that Annual Conference with notice of the vacancy sent by the agency to the secretary of the Annual Conference; and a vacancy in the additional membership may be filled by the agency itself. *Am. 2012 Am. 2008*

2. Where there is a vacancy in the position of: *Adopted 2008*

a) the General Conference treasurer and/or assistant treasurer(s), the vacancy shall be filled by the General Conference Executive Council after taking into consideration any nomination(s) for the position from the Finance and Administration Council; and

b) the Secretary of the Trustees, and/or assistant secretary(ies), the vacancy shall be filled by the Council of Trustees upon nomination of the General Conference Executive Council (which shall make such nomination(s) after consultation with the Finance *Adopted 2008*

and Administration Council and the Council of Trustees).

¶309. The employment and cessation of employment of employees of General Conference agencies shall require the approval or authorisation of the General Conference Executive Council. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2008*

¶310. *Fiscal Year and Quadrennium.* 1. The fiscal year for The Methodist Church in Singapore shall be from 1 August to 31 July. *Am. 2012* *ed. 2009* *ed. 2020*

2. For the purposes of the General Conference and unless otherwise specified in *The Book of Discipline* for a specific purpose, the term "quadrennium" shall be deemed to be the four-year period beginning from the adjournment of the regular session of the General Conference and ending immediately before the adjournment of the regular session of the next General Conference. *ed. 2009* *Am. 2004*

3. For the purposes of the Annual Conference the term "quadrennium" shall be deemed to be the four-year period beginning from the adjournment of the regular session of the Annual Conference in the year that the General Conference meets in regular session and ending immediately before the adjournment of the regular session of the Annual Conference in the year that the next General Conference meets in regular session. *ed. 2009* *Adopted 2004*

Section II. General Conference Executive Council

¶311. 1. There shall be a **General Conference Executive Council** of The Methodist Church in Singapore, hereinafter called "the council". *ed. 2020*

2. *Amenability.* The council shall report to and be amenable to the General Conference.

3. *Purpose.* The purpose of the council is to perform defined responsibilities of review and oversight over the affairs (including financial and other matters) of the General Conference and, on behalf of the General Conference, in relation to the other agencies and to perform other assigned functions.

¶312. *Responsibilities.* The responsibilities of the council shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The council shall be responsible for the raising of necessary *Am. 2008*

funds for the work of the General Conference and shall receive from the Finance and Administration Council the proposed annual budgets of the programme councils, in order that it may review such budgets in relation to the programme proposals made by those councils in their budget requests.

2. To designate, in cooperation with the Finance and Administration Council, the council or other unit to undertake a special study ordered by the General Conference when the conference fails to make such a designation.

3. To assign responsibilities for implementation of themes, missional priorities, and/or special programmes initiated between sessions of the General Conference to the council or to special task forces created by the General Conference Executive Council.

4. To recommend to the General Conference, after consultation with the Council of Presidents, the number and timing of special days which are to be observed on a churchwide basis.

5. To relate to Annual Conferences or their Executive Boards:

a) to provide resources for them related to their basic tasks;

b) to enhance two-way communication with them;

c) to assist in developing comprehensive approaches to planning, research, evaluation and coordination; and

d) to inform of significant issues identified through the monitoring of trends in society and the Church.

6. to resolve any overlapping in structure or functions or lack of cooperation among the agencies.

7. To study the connectional structures of The Methodist Church in Singapore and, after consultation with the councils, recommend to the General Conference such legislative changes as may be appropriate to effect desirable modifications of existing connectional structures. *ed. 2020*

8. To review and evaluate the effectiveness of the agencies in fulfilling the ministries assigned to them (¶302.3).

9. To keep under review the concurrence of agencies with the Social Principles (¶¶81–92) of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

10. To approve the appointment of all directors nominated to *Adopted 2004*

represent the General Conference in any corporate entity. *ed. 2020 Am. 2024*

11. To determine the need for and to develop and implement plans for themes, missional priorities and/or special programmes for the ministry of the church for any particular quadrennium and, after consultation with the Council of Presidents, to recommend them to the General Conference for consideration. *[2002 Ed. ¶312.10]*

12. To report to the General Conference for its approval a summary of all decisions and recommendations made dealing with programme changes and structure overlap. *[2002 Ed. ¶312.11]*

13. To review, with the agencies, all valid resolutions and positions adopted by the General Conference, and recommend to the General Conference the removal of obsolete materials. *[2002 Ed. ¶312.12]*

14. To act in concert with the Finance and Administration Council to establish a procedure for making a quadrennial review, initiating proposals, and/or responding to proposals by all agencies including councils regarding the location of office and staff and report the same to the General Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶312.13]*

15. To act in concert with the Finance and Administration Council with the intent that its committees and/or members should (where appropriate) be designated to oversee key areas of governance and operations under documented terms of reference. *Adopted 2008 Ed. 2009 Am. 2024*

16. To make an annual report of its decisions to the Special Session of the General Conference occurring each year. *Adopted 2008*

17. To discharge the governance responsibilities applicable to the General Conference as a registered charity. *Adopted 2020*

¶313. *Organisation.* 1. *Membership.* The membership of the council shall consist of:

a) the bishop; *[2002 Ed. ¶313.1a)(1)]*

b) the presidents of each Annual Conference; *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶313.1a)(2)]*

c) the lay leader (or, in the absence of the lay leader, an associate lay leader) of each Annual Conference; *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶313.1a)(3)]*

d) the president of General Conference Women's Society of *[2002 Ed. ¶313.1a)(4)]*

Christian Service;

e) two ministers and two lay persons elected by each Annual Conference; *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶313.1a)(5)] Am. 2008*

f) each Annual Conference shall also be represented by not more than three ministers elected by each Annual Conference as alternate members of the council (who shall have voice at all meetings and shall be entitled to vote in the absence of substantive ministerial members from their Annual Conference, in the order of precedence established by the Annual Conference); *ed. 2013 Adopted 2004*

g) each Annual Conference shall also be represented by not more than three lay persons elected by each Annual Conference as alternate members of the council (who shall have voice at all meetings and shall be entitled to vote in the absence of substantive lay members from their Annual Conference, in the order of precedence established by the Annual Conference); *ed. 2013 Adopted 2004*

h) the chairperson of the Finance and Administration Council and the vice-chairperson(s) shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. The chairperson of the Finance and Administration Council shall be a lay person elected by the General Conference and who is not an employee of the General Conference, or any Annual Conference or any Local Conference or any of their respective agencies and shall not serve for more than two consecutive quadrennia; *Am. 2008 [2002 Ed. ¶313.1a)(6)] ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

i) the General Conference secretary (¶204.1) and assistant secretaries (if any) (¶204.3) shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. *Am. 2008 [2002 Ed. ¶313.1a)(6)] ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

j) The Secretary of the Trustees and the assistant secretaries (if any) (¶385.1) shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. The *Am. 2008 [2002 Ed. ¶313.1a)(6)] ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

Secretary of the Trustees and the assistant secretaries (if any) shall be elected by the General Conference and upon such election their appointments shall be confirmed by the Council of Trustees;

k) the General Conference treasurer (¶325.1) and one or more assistant treasurer(s) (who shall be lay persons elected by the General Conference) and shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. The treasurer and assistant treasurer(s) shall not be employees of the General Conference, or any Annual Conference or any Local Conference or any of their respective agencies and the treasurer shall not serve for more than two consecutive quadrennia; *Am. 2008 [2002 Ed. ¶313.1a)(6)] ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

l) the chairpersons or duly appointed representatives of all General Conference councils and agencies, paid directors and secretaries of the said councils and agencies shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote; and *ed. 2013 [2002 Ed. ¶313.1a)(6)] ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

m) The chairperson of the Council of Governance shall be a lay person not employed by the General Conference or any Annual Conference or any Local Conference or their respective agencies and elected by the General Conference and shall be an *ex-officio*. An *ex-officio* is not a member but is entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. The chairperson shall not serve in that position for more than two consecutive quadrennia and shall not concurrently be the General Conference treasurer or the chairperson of the Finance and Administration Council. *Adopted 2008 Am. 2020 ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

2. The members of the council shall serve for the quadrennium. No voting lay members elected in their personal capacity shall be eligible to serve for more than three consecutive four-year terms. This provision shall come into effect immediately after the adjournment of General Conference and the sixth quadrennium (1996–2000) shall be considered the first four-year term. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶313.1b)]*

2A. *Employees Disqualified.* No lay person employed by the *Adopted 2008*

General Conference, any Annual Conference or any Local Conference or any of their respective agencies shall be eligible to serve as a voting member on the General Conference Executive Council. *ed. 2009*

2B. Involvement in the day-to-day operations of the General Conference (in either a paid or unpaid capacity) shall not prevent a person from being eligible to serve on the General Conference Executive Council. For the avoidance of doubt, such person (if serving on the General Conference Executive Council) shall be subject to ¶307.3. *Adopted 2012*

2C. *Change in Membership Composition.* Any change in the voting membership of the General Conference Executive Council shall be notified to the Commissioner of Charities within two weeks of such change or such later time as may be permitted by the Commissioner of Charities. *Am. 2026*

3. *Meetings.* a) The council shall meet at least twice during each calendar year or at such other times upon the call of the bishop or upon the written request of one-fifth of its members. *[2002 Ed. ¶313.2a)]*

b) At least 14 days' notice shall be sent to all persons who have been elected to membership on the council. *[2002 Ed. ¶313.2b)]*

c) Not less than half of the voting members shall constitute a quorum with at least two members from each Annual Conference present. *[2002 Ed. ¶313.2c)] ed. 2016*

4. a) *Decisions at Meetings.* Unless otherwise provided or the meeting otherwise decides, all decisions shall require a majority vote of all members present and voting. *Adopted. 2020*

b) *Decisions Made Between Meetings.* In cases of urgency or where a physical meeting is impracticable, an absolute majority of the voting membership of General Conference Executive Council by affirmative vote may make decisions by way of circular resolutions done by regular mail or email provided always that no such decision shall be made where at least one-tenth or three voting members (whichever is the lesser) of the voting membership indicate a preference for a physical meeting. All such decisions shall be duly reported at the next meeting of the General Conference Executive

Council.

5. *Officers.* The council shall elect from the voting membership of the council one or more vice-chairpersons and a recording secretary (and, unless so elected, the General Conference secretary and assistant secretaries shall serve as recording secretary and assistant recording secretaries). The bishop shall be its presiding officer. The recording secretary shall keep a permanent record of its meetings and of any decisions reached. *Am. 2020 Am. 2008 [2002 Ed. ¶313.3]*

Section III. Finance and Administration Council

¶321. 1. There shall be a Finance and Administration Council of The Methodist Church in Singapore, hereinafter called "the council". *ed. 2020*

2. *Amenability.* The council shall report to and be amenable to the General Conference Executive Council.

¶322. *Organisation.* 1. *Membership.* The members of the council shall be as follows:

a) a chairperson to be elected by the General Conference (¶313.1h) who shall be a lay person elected by the General Conference and who is not an employee of the General Conference, or any Annual Conference or any Local Conference or any of their respective agencies and shall not serve for more than two consecutive quadrennia; *Am. 2016 [2013 Ed. ¶313.1h)]*

b) the Board on Finance chairpersons from each Annual Conference (or, in the absence of such chairperson, a vice-chairperson designated by the chairperson); *Am. 2008*

c) two members nominated by each Annual Conference and the Annual Conference shall nominate, in addition, not more than two persons as alternate members of the council (who shall have voice at all meetings and shall be entitled to vote in the absence of the substantive members from their Annual Conference, in the order of precedence established by the Annual Conference); *Am. 2008* *ed.2016*

d) the Annual Conference presidents;

e) four additional members to be elected by the General Conference Executive Council;

f) the bishop, the president of General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, the General Conference secretary and assistant secretaries (if any) and treasurer and assistant treasurers (if any), the Secretary of the Trustees and assistant secretaries (if any), chairpersons of the council's committees (if not already council members) and the senior ranking manager within the General Conference office shall be members with voice but without vote. *Am. 2008* *ed. 2016* *Am. 2016*

2. *Meetings and Quorum.* The council shall meet annually and at such other times as are necessary on call of the chairperson or on written request of one-fifth of the members. The majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum. *Am. 2020*

2A. a) *Decisions at Meetings.* Unless otherwise provided or the meeting otherwise decides, all decisions shall require a majority vote of all members present and voting. *Adopted 2020*

b) *Decisions Made Between Meetings.* In cases of urgency or where a physical meeting is impracticable, an absolute majority of the voting membership of the Council by affirmative vote may make decisions by way of circular resolutions done by regular mail or e-mail provided always that no such decision shall be made where at least one-tenth or three voting members (whichever is the lesser) of the voting membership indicate a preference for a physical meeting. All such decisions shall be duly reported at the next meeting of the Council.

2B. *Alternative Arrangements to Meet by Electronic Means.* Although physical meetings are to be preferred and the default mode for such meetings, in addition to being able to make decisions in cases of urgency or where a physical meeting is impracticable pursuant to ¶322.2Ab), the council may make alternative arrangements to meet by electronic means subject to having received the approval of the General Conference Executive Council and subject to such conditions as the General Conference Executive Council may impose. *Am. 2024*

3. *Officers.* a) The council shall elect from the membership of the council one or more vice-chairpersons. *Am. 2008* *Am. 2016*

b) The Council may appoint such persons as it thinks fit (including an employee or staff member) as recording secretary. *Am. 2016 [2013 Ed. ¶322.4e)]*

4. *Committees.* a) The council shall organise the following committees which shall be amenable to the council:

(1) Committee on Reserves Management; *Am. 2012*

(2) Committee on Pensions;

(3) Committee on Human Resource Management;

(4) Committee on Scholarships; and

(5) other committees as needed for the performance of its duties.

b) The committees shall comprise: *Am. 2016*

(1) persons appointed by the council from within or outside its membership; and

(2) additional members co-opted by the relevant committee (with the approval of the council) who have special knowledge or background which will aid in the work of that committee.

c) The chairperson, secretary and such other officers of such committees as may be deemed necessary shall be elected from among the appointed or co-opted members, if not designated by the Finance and Administration Council. *Am. 2008* *Am. 2016*

d) If not already members, the bishop, the chairperson and vice-chairperson(s) of the Finance and Administration Council, and the senior ranking manager within the General Conference office shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. *Am. 2008* *ed. 2020* *Am. 2020* *Am. 2024*

¶323. *Fiscal Responsibilities.* The council shall be accountable to The Methodist Church in Singapore through the General Conference in all matters relating to the receiving, disbursing and reporting of funds. In the exercise of its fiscal accountability role the council shall have the authority and responsibility to: *ed. 2020*

1. Submit to the General Conference at its regular or designated special session for its action and determination, budgets of expense for its own operation and such other funds as the General Conference may establish. *Am. 2004*

2. Recommend the formula(e) by which all apportionments to the Annual Conferences shall be determined, subject to the approval of the General Conference.

3. Review the receipt and disbursement of funds in accordance with budgets approved by the General Conference or its properly authorised agencies. *Am. 2020* *Am. 2024*

3A. Review the annual financial statements of the General Conference for recommendation of the same to the General Conference Executive Council for approval after consideration of the comments of the Council of Governance and the auditors. *Adopted 2020*

4. Review the oversight of the accounting functions for the General Conference. In the interest of sound fiscal management, the council will ensure that expenditures do not exceed receipts and available reserves, and are within the approved budget. *Am. 2020*

5. Establish policy governing the functions of banking, payroll, accounting, budget control and asset development. The council shall bring under centralised control the financial records and funds belonging to the General and Annual Conferences, organisations, institutions, agencies and other bodies forming part of The Methodist Church in Singapore. It shall perform the functions of banking, cheque preparation and payroll on behalf of the conferences and agencies to maximise efficiency of operation. *Am. 2016* *Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 1 of 2016*

6. Develop investment policies for, suggest investment advisers for, and review, at the council's discretion but on at least an annual basis, the performance of all invested funds of the General Conference. The council shall have complete authority to manage any portfolio of less than $1,500,000. The council is encouraged to invest in institutions, companies, corporations or funds which make a positive contribution toward the realisation of the goals outlined in the Social Principles of The Methodist Church in Singapore (¶¶81–92). *ed. 2020*

7. Establish policy governing disbursement of pensions to eligible persons or, in special circumstances, their nominees. Responsibility for determining a pensioner's eligibility for pension credit and the confirmation of the number of years of approved

service rendered shall rest with the Mission, Provisional Annual Conference or Annual Conference.

8. Establish a scheme for lumpsum payments in commutation of annual pension payable.

9. Administer the scholarship programme of The Methodist Church in Singapore (if any) and if thought fit provide assistance for the training of church leaders. *Am. 2004 ed. 2020*

10. Receive, collect and administer for the benefit of the General Conference or its agencies any and all donations and gifts donated or given to the General Conference or any such agency or through The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore for the General Conference or such agency. *Am. 2016*

11. Develop policies governing the giving of loans and donations to any related or unrelated parties or individuals (including employees) for approval by the General Conference Executive Council and oversee the implementation of the same. *Adopted 2008*

12. Ensure that the General Conference financial manual is in place and reviewed regularly. *Adopted 2008*

¶324. *Other Administrative Responsibilities.* The council shall have the authority and responsibility to:

1. Act in concert with the General Conference Executive Council to establish a procedure for making a quadrennial review, initiating proposals and/or responding to proposals by the agencies regarding the location of office and staff and report the same to the General Conference. *Am. 2004*

2. Exercise on behalf of the General Conference a property reporting function concerning property titles, values, debts, general maintenance, lease or rental costs, space usage and such other information as the council may deem relevant.

3. Take all necessary legal steps to safeguard and protect the interests and rights of the Church. The council shall have the authority to pursue policies and procedures necessary to preserve the charity status of the Church and its affiliated organisations.

4. Develop, review, maintain and update as needed standards for computer information and data.

5. Establish uniform policies and practices in the employment and remuneration of staff. The **Committee on Human Resource Management** shall:

a) prepare quadrennially, review annually and recommend to the council an appropriate salary schedule, based upon responsibilities, for staff of councils, boards and other units; and

b) develop and recommend to the council a schedule of benefits for an employee benefit programme for staff and any changes required thereto from time to time.

6. Maintain an accurate record of the mail addresses of all ministers; supply pastors, retired ordained ministers; and such other lists of General Conference and Annual Conference councils, boards, commissions and committees, and officers of same, and of local church chairpersons, as may be deemed necessary.

7. Collate and distribute relevant statistical information of The Methodist Church in Singapore and its agencies. *ed. 2020*

8. Provide guidance and consultation in the area of local church management and financial administration, including the establishment of professional standards.

¶325. 1. There shall be a **General Conference treasurer** (¶313.1k)) elected by the General Conference and (where the General Conference thinks appropriate) assistant treasurer(s). The General Conference treasurer and assistant treasurer(s) shall be lay persons who are not employees of the General Conference, any Annual Conference or any Local Conference or any of their respective agencies. It is preferable but not mandatory that the treasurer has relevant accounting qualifications or appropriate financial literacy or appropriate practical experience. *Am. 2008*

2. The term of office for the treasurer and assistant treasurer(s) (if any) shall be for the quadrennium until a successor has been duly elected *provided* always that no person shall serve as treasurer for more than two consecutive quadrennia. *Am. 2008*

3. The treasurer and assistant treasurer(s) (if any), if not members of the General Conference shall have the right of voice but without vote at the General Conference and shall be *ex-officios* *Am. 2008*

of the General Conference Executive Council. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. *Am. 2020* *Am. 2024*

4. If in the interim of quadrennial sessions of the General Conference the office of treasurer or assistant treasurer(s) (if any) shall be vacated for any reason, the bishop and the General Conference Executive Council shall elect a successor to serve until the next session of the General Conference. *Am. 2008*

5. The General Conference treasurer assisted by the assistant treasurer(s) (if any) shall be responsible for: *Am. 2008*

a) informing the president and the chairperson of the Board on Finance of each Annual Conference the apportionment to the Annual Conference for General Conference funds as may be determined by the General Conference;

b) the maintenance of accounts of all funds received from Annual Conference treasurers and keep each fund separate, none to be drawn on for the benefit of another fund; and *ed. 2013*

c) the disbursement of all funds received for the purpose that they were remitted and disburse all funds received for all causes to the Annual Conference treasurers in accordance with the apportionment decided by the General Conference Executive Council.

¶326. The General Conference treasurer shall transmit to the Board of Finance chairperson and the president of each Annual Conference the conference commitment apportioned to the conference for General Conference. The treasurer assisted by the assistant treasurer(s) (if any) shall keep an account of all amounts remitted by the Annual Conferences. *Am. 2008*

¶327. Subject to the directions of the Finance and Administration Council and the General Conference Executive Council, the treasurer shall: *Am. 2024*

1. Oversee the receipt and disbursement of funds in accordance with established processes of the General Conference and in accordance with budgets approved by the General

Conference or its properly authorised agencies.

2. Oversee the performance of accounting functions for the General Conference.

3. Be responsible for the preparation of the annual financial statements of the General Conference for approval by the Finance and Administration Council for recommendation to the General Conference Executive Council for approval.

¶328. The treasurer shall be accountable to the Finance and Administration Council and the General Conference Executive Council. The treasurer assisted by the assistant treasurer(s) (if any) shall make at the regular or designated special session of the General Conference a full report of the financial statements of the General Conference for the previous fiscal year in respect of special session and for the previous four fiscal years in respect of the designated regular session. *Am. 2008* *Am. 2024*

Section IV. Council on Archives and History

¶331. The Methodist Church in Singapore shall have a Council on Archives and History which shall gather, preserve, hold title to and disseminate materials on the history of The Methodist Church in Singapore and its antecedents. It shall cooperate with all Methodist Churches in the region and elsewhere and shall do everything possible to promote and care for the historical interests of The Methodist Church in Singapore. It shall maintain an archive in which to preserve the historical records and materials of every kind related to The Methodist Church in Singapore. It shall provide guidance for the proper creation, maintenance and disposition of documentary record material at all levels of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

¶332. *Organisation.* 1. The council shall be constituted quadrennially and its members and all officers elected by it shall hold office until their successors have been chosen.

2. *Membership.* The council shall be composed of: *Am. 2008*

a) a chairperson to be elected by the General Conference;

b) one minister and one lay member to be nominated by each

Annual Conference; and

c) not more than three additional members who may be co-opted by the council.

3. *Meetings.* The council shall meet annually or at special meetings on call of the chairperson. A majority of the members of the council shall constitute a quorum.

4. *Archivist.* The council shall nominate one or more person(s) to be appointed as Archivist(s) of The Methodist Church in Singapore, such appointment(s) to be made by the bishop pursuant to ¶579. *Adopted 2008 ed. 2020*

Section V. Council on Communications

¶341. There shall be a Council on Communications of The Methodist Church in Singapore, hereinafter called "the council". *ed. 2020*

¶342. *Responsibilities.* Specific responsibilities and functions of the council and its staff are as follows:

1. It shall be the official news-gathering and distributing agency for The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

2. It shall assist in building and upholding the image of The Methodist Church in Singapore and safeguard its reputation. *Am. 2024*

3. It shall give oversight to a comprehensive communication system for the General Conference, providing a total view of communication structure and practices, including digital and telecommunications. *Am. 2024*

4. It shall manage and operate all communications platforms of the General Conference including the official website, social media and broadcast channels. *Am. 2024*

5. It shall publish a periodical known as the ***Methodist Message*** containing news and information of The Methodist Church in Singapore and its agencies and of activities and developments of other Churches, ecumenical bodies and other agencies of interest to Methodists. *Am. 2024 ed. 2020*

6. It shall be responsible for coordinating crisis communications on behalf of The Methodist Church in Singapore in consultation with the relevant governing bodies and subject to *Am. 2024*

¶210. This includes maintaining a crisis communications manual.

7. It shall assist in educating and training in the principles and skills of communication, and developing information services and other innovative services which provide channels of communication to and from all levels of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Am. 2024*

8. It shall give leadership in study and research in the field of communication, applying research findings from the professional and academic communities to the work of The Methodist Church in Singapore. It shall cooperate with other agencies and other levels of The Methodist Church in Singapore in research and development work in the field of communication and share the findings of study and research. *Am. 2024*

9. It shall supervise the use of the official insignia of The Methodist Church in Singapore and preserve the integrity of its design. The insignia may be used by any official agency of The Methodist Church in Singapore, including local churches, to identify the work, programme and materials of The Methodist Church in Singapore. Any commercial use of the insignia must be explicitly authorised by the General Conference Executive Council. *Am. 2024* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

10. Provided that only the General Conference or the bishop (in consultation with the Council of Presidents) may speak for The Methodist Church in Singapore, the Council may be directed to draft media statements and responses. The Council will also be the point of contact for all media queries including those directed to churches and agencies and engage with media as directed by the appropriate authority. *Am. 2024*

¶343. *Organisation.* 1. The members of the Council on Communications shall be: *Am. 2004*

a) the bishop or his nominee who shall be the chairperson; *Adopted 2004*

b) the presidents of the Annual Conferences; *Adopted 2004*

c) two members, one of whom may be a minister, nominated by each Annual Conference; and *[2002 Ed. ¶343.1b)]* *Am. 2024*

d) not more than four additional members to be elected by the council. *ed. 2013* *[2002 Ed. ¶343.1c)]*

1A. The staff of the General Conference communications department may be in attendance to assist the Council. *[2002 Ed. ¶343.1d)] Am. 2024*

2. *Meetings.* The council shall meet annually and at such other times as are necessary. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

3. *Officers.* The council shall elect from the membership of the council one or more vice-chairperson(s) and a secretary.

Section VI. Disciple Agency *Adopted 2004*

¶351. There shall be a Disciple Agency for The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Adopted 2004 ed. 2020*

¶352. *Mission.* The mission of the agency shall be the promotion and development of a lifestyle of discipleship through: *Adopted 2004*

1. the DISCIPLE programme originated by the United Methodist Church; *Adopted 2004*

2. other related programmes; and *Adopted 2004*

3. such other programmes which give attention to lay training, stewardship, theology, bible study, spiritual formation and contemporary Christian concerns in all local churches of The Methodist Church in Singapore, to other churches in Singapore and to churches in the region, in particular to churches affiliated to the Methodist Missions Society. *Adopted 2004 Am. 2024 ed. 2020*

¶353. *Organisation.* The Disciple Agency shall be governed by an Executive Committee which shall consist of: *Adopted 2004*

1. a chairperson elected by the General Conference; *Adopted 2004 Am. 2016*

2. three representatives appointed by each Annual Conference, one minister, one lay person and a third representative who may be either a minister or a lay person (or, in the absence of such appointment, by the Executive Board of such Annual Conference); *Adopted 2004 Am. 2016*

3. not more than six additional members to be co-opted by the Executive Committee; and *Adopted 2004 Am. 2024*

4. the bishop and the presidents of each Annual Conference shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to *Adopted 2004 Am. 2020*

all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote, *Am. 2024*

provided always that (unless the General Conference otherwise resolves) no person shall be chosen as chairperson, representative or additional member of the Executive Committee if such person has not completed the DISCIPLE Leaders Training Event. *Adopted 2004 ed. 2017*

¶354. *Meetings.* The Executive Committee of the Agency shall meet annually and at such other times as are necessary. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. *Adopted 2004*

¶355. *Officers.* The Executive Committee of the Agency shall elect from the Executive Committee one vice-chairperson, a recording secretary and such other officers as they deem fit. *Adopted 2004*

¶356. *Responsibilities.* The Executive Committee of the agency shall function as the executive body for the oversight and co-ordination of the DISCIPLE, related programmes and other programmes. The agency shall:

1. formulate and implement the promotion and development strategy; *Adopted 2004*
2. select, train and develop trainers and helpers; *Adopted 2004*
3. establish and execute action plans; *Adopted 2004*
4. establish the financial budget needed for its operations; and *Adopted 2004 ed. 2013*
5. work with the Annual Conferences in the development and implementation of the relevant programmes in the local churches. *Adopted 2004*

Section VII. Council on Education

¶361. There shall be a Council on Education of The Methodist Church in Singapore, hereinafter called "the council". *ed. 2020*

¶362. *Organisation.* 1. *Membership.* The members of the Council on Education shall be:

a) the bishop of The Methodist Church in Singapore who shall be the chairperson; *Am. 2004 ed. 2020*

b) the presidents of the Annual Conferences;

c) one minister and one lay member appointed by the Executive Board of each Annual Conference;

d) education secretary;

e) assistant education secretaries (if any);

f) chairman of the Committee on Education;

g) Director, Ministry in Schools;

h) associate directors, Ministry in Schools (if any); *ed. 2013*

i) the chairpersons or duly appointed representatives of the Board of Governors and Board of Management of Methodist Schools; and

j) the chairperson or duly authorised representative of any agency constituted under the authority of the General Conference to manage and/or coordinate the activities of Methodist pre-schools. *Adopted 2020*

2. *Meetings.* a) The council shall meet twice annually and at such other times as are necessary.

b) Notice of meeting shall be at least 14 days. However, the chairperson shall have power to call a meeting at short notice in an emergency.

c) A majority of the members present shall constitute a quorum.

3. *Officers.* The council may elect from among the Annual Conference presidents one or more vice-chairpersons. The education secretary shall be the recording secretary. *Am. 2004*

4. *Financial Support.* The work of the council shall be supported from conference commitment of the Church, the amount to be determined by the General Conference following the budgeting procedures established in ¶323.

¶363. *Responsibilities.* The council shall:

1. Promote and coordinate the work and development of Methodist colleges, and schools in the Government-aided schools system and of private institutions and kindergartens and nurseries which shall be operated in accordance with Christian standards and ideals as interpreted by The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

2. Consider and establish policy on matters pertaining to Methodist education.

3. Liaise with the Ministry of Education on matters pertaining to the Methodist Schools including the appointment of principals

and vice-principals.

4. Consider and determine the budgetary requirements of the council.

5. Coordinate fund-raising activities for schools projects to improve facilities in schools and pre-schools. *Am. 2020*

6. Recommend to the Finance and Administration Council the disbursement of grants for school projects.

7. Review the annual report of the education secretary.

8. Present an annual report on the state of the Methodist Schools and pre-schools to the regular session of Annual Conferences. *Am. 2020*

¶364. 1. The council shall organise a **Committee on Education** consisting of:

a) a representative from each Annual Conference who is a member of the council, one of whom shall be appointed by the council as the chairperson;

b) heads of colleges and schools of The Methodist Church in Singapore and the senior ranking manager of any agency constituted under the authority of the General Conference to manage and/or coordinate the activities of Methodist pre-schools; and *Am. 2008* *ed. 2020* *Am. 2020*

c) the education secretary who shall be the secretary; and

d) the assistant education secretaries (if any). *Adopted 2020*

2. The Committee on Education shall meet quarterly. Notice of meeting shall be at least seven days. A majority of members attending shall form a quorum.

3. The Committee on Education shall: *ed. 2013*

a) have no policy-making functions. All policy matters are reserved to the Council on Education; *ed. 2013* *Am. 2008*

b) implement the decisions of the Council; and *ed. 2017*

c) attend to such other matters related to the colleges, schools, kindergartens and nurseries. *ed. 2017*

¶365. 1. The council shall organise a **Committee on Ministry in Schools** consisting of:

a) the bishop who shall preside;

b) the education secretary;

c) the assistant education secretaries (if any);

d) the chairperson of the Committee on Education;

e) the director, Christian Ministry in Schools;

f) the associate director, Christian Ministry in Schools (if any);

g) the presidents of Annual Conferences;

h) a representative from each Annual Conference Board on the Ministry; and

i) a representative from each Annual Conference Board on Diaconal Ministry.

2. The committee shall:

a) decide on the employment of Christian ministry staff and their salary entry level contingent on credential clearance by the relevant Board(s) on the Ministry within budgetary constraints;

b) make recommendations to Annual Conferences on salary scheme, terms of employment, sabbatical or study leave of Christian ministry staff; *ed. 2013*

c) make recommendations to Board(s) of Finance of Annual Conferences on budgetary requirements for Christian ministry in schools; and

d) supervise the implementation of policies for Christian ministry in schools.

¶366. *Appointees.* 1. The council shall appoint an **education secretary** and may appoint such assistant education secretaries as it may deem necessary who shall serve for the quadrennium. The education secretary shall be a member in good standing of The Methodist Church in Singapore for at least five years. An acceptable theological training qualification, though not a requirement, would be preferred. *ed. 2016* *ed. 2020* *Am. 2017*

The education secretary shall:

a) be the secretary to the Council on Education;

b) have administrative oversight of the education secretariat;

c) be responsible for the general welfare of the Methodist Schools and pre-schools in Singapore; *Am. 2020*

d) unless substituted by an assistant education secretary, be a member of the Board of Governors, Board of Management or *Am. 2004* *Am. 2024*

School Management Committee of each Methodist School and the board of any agency constituted under the authority of the General Conference to manage and/or coordinate the activities of Methodist pre-schools; and assist in determining policies to ensure that: *Am. 2020*

(1) the Christian character of Methodist schools and pre-schools is preserved and enhanced; and *Am. 2020*

(2) the vision and mission of the Church is fulfilled.

e) be the reporting officer for the Council on Education;

f) undertake any other duties as directed by the council or committee; and *ed. 2013*

g) report to the chairperson of the Council on Education. *Adopted 2004*

2. There shall be a **Director, Ministry in Schools** appointed by the bishop in consultation with the Council on Education and the Council of Presidents. Associate directors may also be appointed. The director shall provide administrative oversight of Christian ministry staff in the schools and shall report to the Council on Education. The responsibilities of the director shall be to: *ed. 2006*

a) visit schools and hold consultations with the principals concerning Christian ministry in the schools;

b) oversee the work and ministry of the chaplains and Christian ministry staff;

c) call together, when necessary, chaplains and Christian ministry staff to study and recommend action on vital issues;

d) coordinate combined Christian ministry activities of Methodist schools;

e) work in partnership with the school principals to supervise relations, communicate and dialogue with para-church organisations functioning within the schools;

f) undertake any other duties as directed by the council or committee; and *ed. 2013*

g) between meetings of the Council on Education, report to the chairperson of the Council on Education. *Adopted 2004*

3. **Pastors appointed as chaplain** (with one pastor as chaplain-in-charge) by the bishop, in consultation with the respective Annual Conference presidents (as per ¶568.22), shall *Adopted 2016* *ed. 2016*

have the following role:

a) The chaplain represents the Church and the bishop in each school; acting as a symbolic presence of the Church.

b) The chaplain acts as adviser to the school principal and Chaplaincy Committee for the religious programme of the school. *Am. 2024*

c) The chaplain will guide the Christian ministry staff.

d) The chaplain is directly responsible to the Director, Ministry in Schools for religious affairs of the school.

e) The chaplain is expected to be regularly present to represent the Church at chapel services and to participate in all other school services that will require his/her presence, as consistent with the chaplain's position.

f) The chaplain is expected to speak at the Chapels, and at morning devotions (especially if there is a tradition of chaplains giving devotions), of the school.

g) The chaplain is to act as a resource for ideas, themes and topics for the religious programme. He should act as a reference for speakers.

4. **Christian ministry staff** under appointment by Annual Conferences to Methodist schools shall be accountable to the Director, Ministry in Schools and shall work in consultation with and under the guidance of the chaplain-in-charge and the Chaplaincy Committee. *ed. 2006* *ed. 2016* *Am. 2024*

a) The Christian ministry staff shall undertake responsibilities as follows:

(1) counselling;

(2) chapel programming including Religious Emphasis Week;

(3) Christian fellowships;

(4) ministry to the sick and bereaved;

(5) establishing Bible study and prayer groups;

(6) conducting vacation camps;

(7) religious education;

(8) and hostel ministry (where applicable); and

(9) in dealing with the staff and students of the school, the Christian ministry staff shall: *ed. 2013*

i) represent The Methodist Church in Singapore in the school; *ed. 2020*

ii) execute the decisions of the Chaplaincy Committee; and *Am. 2024*

iii) undertake any other responsibilities as directed from time to time. *ed. 2013*

¶367. 1. Christian ministry in schools shall be the responsibility of the Chaplaincy Committee comprising the chaplain-in-charge, the school principal, Christian Ministry Staff, and any other component which promotes the Christian religious programme of the school. *Am. 2024*

2. The Chaplaincy Committee shall have oversight of the Christian ministry in the school, including providing guidance on the overall planning and conduct of Christian programmes, and make recommendations for budgetary requirements for the programme needs. *Am. 2024*

Section VIII. Methodist Missions Society

¶371. There shall be a Methodist Missions Society amenable to the General Conference.

1. The primary mission of the Methodist Missions Society shall be to establish indigenous churches where none currently exist. The Methodist Missions Society recognises that the establishment of indigenous churches will require a variety of ministries depending on the field situation including but not limited to educational, medical, community development and social services. However, these worthy ministries are only supporting ministries and do not take precedence over the Methodist Missions Society's primary mission of establishing indigenous churches where none currently exist.

2. The Methodist Missions Society's strategy in a given geographical location or people group shall be appropriately structured according to the field situation. The Methodist Missions Society may work through appropriate partnership arrangements with overseas Methodist entities or non-Methodist mission entities or pioneer new missionary work in mission fields selected by the Methodist Missions Society where there are no existing Methodist

entities.

3. The Methodist Missions Society shall work with local churches as its partner to promote the service opportunities and needs of mission fields selected by the Methodist Missions Society as well as to ensure that missionaries are adequately cared for.

¶372. *Organisation.* 1. The Executive Committee of the Methodist Missions Society shall consist of:

a) a chairperson elected by the General Conference;

b) one minister and one lay member nominated by each Annual Conference;

c) not more than four additional members to be elected by the executive committee; and *ed. 2013*

d) the bishop, the president of each Annual Conference, the chairperson of the Board on Missions of each Annual Conference and the director of the Methodist Missions Society shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. *Am. 2020* *Am. 2024*

2. *Meetings.* The Executive Committee of the Methodist Missions Society shall meet annually and at such other times as are necessary. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. *Am. 2008*

3. *Officers.* The Executive Committee of the Methodist Missions Society shall elect from the Executive Committee of the Methodist Missions Society one or more vice-chairpersons and a recording secretary. *Am. 2008*

4. Responsibilities of the Executive Committee are:

a) to establish and review the objectives of the Methodist Missions Society;

b) to determine policy and programme, to establish goals and priorities, to project long-range plans, to evaluate the programme and services of the Methodist Missions Society;

c) to determine the mission fields to be served and the nature of the work to be undertaken;

d) to establish appropriate organisation of personnel and structure to accomplish its programme and achieve established *ed. 2013*

objectives; and

e) to secure, appropriate and spend money to underwrite its programme and achieve its objectives.

¶373. *Relationships.* 1. The Methodist Missions Society in its function as the home office has the responsibility of overseeing the following areas:

a) recruitment, pre-service preparation and training; service assignment, raising of financial support and accounting, continuing education and training, care and supervision, home assignments and retirement planning of its missionaries;

b) working with local churches as partners to accomplish its programmes and fulfil its objective; and

c) challenging Methodists and others to be involved in the work of the Methodist Missions Society by being informed, by praying and by giving. *Am. 2008*

2. The local church shall relate to the Methodist Missions Society as its partner and as the home church of the missionaries by:

a) referring inquirers interested in full-time missions;

b) recommending missionary candidates;

c) providing fellowship, prayer and financial support to missionaries sent from the local church; *Am. 2004*

d) supporting generally or adopting specific work or programmes of the Methodist Missions Society; and *ed. 2013* *Am. 2004*

e) recognising that all matters of deployment and supervision of missionaries and church workers in the operation of the mission fields are the responsibility of the Methodist Missions Society, such responsibility to be undertaken by the Methodist Missions Society in consultation with the local church. *Adopted 2004*

3. The Methodist Missions Society in its function as the field office has the responsibility of overseeing the following areas:

a) pastoral care, field supervision, ministry support, housing and children's education of its missionaries;

b) strategy, plans, programmes, structure and funding of the work on the mission fields;

c) development of local National Leadership; and

d) establishment of appropriate partnerships and networks.

¶374. *Organisation.* 1. There shall be seven categories of missionaries in the Methodist Missions Society: *Am. 2004*

a) *Missionaries in Training (MIT).* These are applicants or missionaries undergoing approved training courses prior to their initial service assignment. *Am. 2004*

b) *Missionary Interns (MI).* These are missionaries who have completed training and orientation to the field. *Adopted 2004*

c) *Missionaries.* These are missionaries who are on their service assignments. *Am. 2004*

d) *Senior Missionaries.* These are missionaries who have completed satisfactorily their initial service of four years and are on subsequent periods of service. *Am. 2004*

e) *Affiliate Missionaries.* Those from the Methodist community who apply to or by invitation of the Methodist Missions Society serve on the Methodist Missions Society's mission field. *Adopted 2020* *Am. 2024*

f) *Associate Missionaries.* Those from the non-Methodist Christian community who apply to or by invitation of the Methodist Missions Society serve on the Methodist Missions Society's mission field. *Am. 2004*

g) *Short-Term Missions Associates.* These are individuals who intend to serve in the mission field for periods of up to a maximum of two years. *Adopted 2004*

2. Together with the Executive Committee of the Methodist Missions Society, Senior Missionaries have the right of participation in the consultative process leading to decisions of the Methodist Missions Society related to missionary welfare and development.

¶375. *Appointment of Missionaries.* 1. A missionary who is a minister from an Annual Conference shall be appointed by the bishop with the concurrence of the Annual Conference president to which the minister belongs after consultation with the Executive Committee of the Methodist Missions Society. *Adopted 2004*

2. A missionary who is a lay person holding membership in a *Adopted 2004*

local church of an Annual Conference shall be appointed by the bishop with the concurrence of the president of the Annual Conference after consultation with the Executive Committee of the Methodist Missions Society.

3. A missionary (whether minister or lay person) who is not from any Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall be appointed by the bishop after consultation with the Methodist Missions Society and with the concurrence of the Council of Presidents. *Adopted 2004*

¶376. *Field Board of Ministry.* 1. The Field Board of Ministry shall oversee, administrate and review ministerial and other matters relating to ordination and licensing of ministers or preachers in Methodist Missions Society mission fields who are not members of an Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Adopted 2004* *ed. 2020*

2. It shall make recommendation for ordination and licensing for approval by the bishop and the Methodist Missions Society. *Adopted 2004*

3. The Field Board of Ministry shall comprise: *Adopted 2004*

a) a chairperson (who shall be an elder in full connection) appointed by the bishop in consultation with the Methodist Missions Society and with the concurrence of the president of the Annual Conference in question; *Adopted 2004*

b) one ministerial representative from each Annual Conference (or alternate) appointed by the president in consultation with the Board of Ministry; and *ed. 2013* *Adopted 2004*

c) the Executive Director of the Methodist Missions Society (if an elder) shall be an *ex-officio*. An *ex-officio* is not a member but is entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. *Adopted 2004* *Am. 2024*

4. The Field Board of Ministry shall be accountable to the bishop. *Adopted 2004*

Section IX. Council on Episcopacy

¶381. 1. The General Conference shall elect for the quadrennium a Council on Episcopacy. The incoming bishop shall *Am. 2012* *Am. 2008*

be entitled to nominate one member to the Council of Episcopacy from the Annual Conference to which the bishop belongs (who may be either a ministerial or lay member) and the remaining members shall be elected on nomination of the respective Annual Conference delegations so that the Council of Episcopacy shall comprise one ministerial and one lay member from each Annual Conference.

2. The Council shall choose its own chairperson and secretary from amongst its members. *Am. 2016*

3. The Council on Episcopacy shall review the work and administration of the bishop, and report to the General Conference its findings for such action as the General Conference may deem appropriate within its constitutional warrant of power. If the need arises, the Council shall exercise the responsibilities set out in ¶576A. *Am. 2016*

4. The Council on Episcopacy shall have no authority to approve or vary the bishop's powers, duties, remuneration, fringe benefits or privileges but, if authorised by the General Conference, may make recommendations on such matters to the Finance and Administration Council, General Conference Executive Council and the General Conference. *Adopted 2012 ed. 2016*

Section X. Council of Presidents

¶382. 1. There shall be a Council of Presidents comprising the bishop and the presidents of each Annual Conference and Provisional Annual Conference. The bishop shall be chairperson of the Council.

2. The Council shall elect a deputy chairman who shall deputise for the bishop in his absence.

3. The Council of Presidents shall be a body for mutual consultation, coordination and the promotion of connectionalism, and shall supervise the work of Provisional Annual Conferences.

4. It shall advise the bishop on all spiritual, connectional, ecumenical and government relations.

5. The bishop may speak on behalf of the Church only after consultation with the Council of Presidents. In urgent situations the bishop shall consult at least the majority of the presidents before

making any statement. The bishop may not commit the Church to any action, stand or policy contrary to the Constitution and Discipline of the Church.

6. The Council of Presidents shall have no executive function.

7. The Council of Presidents shall meet annually and at such other times as necessary.

8. The Council of Presidents shall attend to any other matters as *The Book of Discipline* may direct.

Section XI. Council of Trustees

¶383. 1. There shall be a Council of Trustees of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

2. The council shall report to and be amenable to the General Conference.

¶384. *Organisation.* 1. The membership of the Council of Trustees shall consist of:

a) the bishop;

b) the General Conference secretary;

c) a representative from each Annual Conference; and

d) two Methodists nominated by the General Conference Executive Council preferably with legal or financial expertise.

2. The person appointed as The Secretary of the Trustees and the person(s) (if any) appointed as the assistant secretary or secretaries shall be *ex-officios*. *Ex-officios* are not members but are entitled to all information made available to members and to attend and participate in meetings without the right to vote. *Am. 2020* *Am. 2024*

¶385. *Responsibilities.* The Council of Trustees shall:

1. Appoint the persons elected by the General Conference as the Secretary of the Trustees and assistant secretaries (if any) to such positions (¶313.1j) and ¶¶405–406) and the Council shall for the purposes of such appointment(s) serve as the "Trustees of The Methodist Church in Singapore" pursuant to the Methodist Episcopal Location Board Ordinance, Cap. 368, Singapore Statutes. *Adopted 2008* *Am. 2016*

2. Supervise the work of The Secretary of the Trustees of the *Am. 2008*

Methodist Church in Singapore and approve the grant of powers of attorney. *ed. 2020*

3. Determine which organisations, societies, or agencies of The Methodist Church in Singapore may authorise The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore to act as its trustee. *Am. 2008* *ed. 2020*

4. Formulate rules and guidelines on the procedures to be followed by councils, boards and committees for authorising The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore to execute, on their behalf, legal documents for the purchase and sale of property, contracts, deeds and other legal documents. *Am. 2008* *ed. 2020*

5. Consider the use of all Methodist properties so as to ensure that they are consistent with the policy and interests of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Am. 2008* *Adopted 2004* *ed. 2020*

6. Adjudicate between local churches, institutions, schools, agencies and organisations in the case of question or dispute about the use of any particular property or the siting of any new building or renovation or building projects. *Am. 2008*

7. Perform any duties as directed by the General Conference Executive Council. *Am. 2008*

Section XII. Discipline Revision Commission *Adopted 2004*

¶386. 1. There shall be a Discipline Revision Commission of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Adopted 2004* *ed. 2020*

2. The Commission shall report to and be amenable to the General Conference. *Adopted 2004*

¶387. *Organisation.* 1. *Membership.* The members of the Discipline Revision Commission shall be: *Adopted 2004*

a) a chairperson, to be elected by the General Conference; *Adopted 2004*

b) one minister and one lay member nominated by each Annual Conference; and *Adopted 2004*

c) not more than three additional members to be elected by the Commission. *Adopted 2004*

2. *Alternate or Replacement Members.* If a member of the *Adopted 2004*

Commission is temporarily or permanently unable for any cause to fully discharge his/her duty as a member, an alternate or replacement member shall be appointed in the same manner as provided in ¶308 for vacancies.

3. *Meetings.* The Commission shall meet annually and at such other times as are necessary when a meeting is called by the chairperson, the secretary or a majority of its members. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. *Adopted 2004*

4. *Circular Decisions.* Apart from meetings, the Commission may discharge its functions through the circulation of papers and correspondence between its members (by electronic or other means). A decision may be made by circulation if supported by a majority of the members of the Commission. *Adopted 2004*

5. *Officers and Staff.* The Commission shall elect from its membership a secretary and shall be entitled to administrative support from the paid staff of the General Conference. *Adopted 2004*

¶388. *Responsibilities and Powers.* 1. The general responsibility of the Commission shall be to review the provisions of *The Book of Discipline* with a view towards proposing appropriate revisions thereto. *Adopted 2004*

2. The specific responsibilities of the Commission shall be: *Adopted 2004*

a) to prepare and publish, as soon as practicable after each regular quadrennial session of the General Conference, a revised edition of *The Book of Discipline* incorporating therein all legislation enacted by the General Conference; *Adopted 2004*

b) to consider and, if the Commission thinks fit, to recommend to each regular quadrennial session of the General Conference appropriate additions, amendments, deletions and/or revisions to *The Book of Discipline* and, in so doing, stating the reason(s) in support thereof; *Adopted 2004*

c) (if so requested) to assist the General Conference, the Annual Conferences, their agencies and/or other organisations within The Methodist Church in Singapore in evaluating the need for legislation and, if the Commission thinks fit, to recommend the form such proposed legislation may take; and *Adopted 2004* *ed. 2020*

d) to consider and, if the Commission thinks fit, to render its views in respect of any petition(s) made by any organisation, minister or lay member to the General Conference pursuant to ¶207. *Adopted 2004*

3. In discharging its responsibilities, the Commission shall be empowered at its discretion to: *Adopted 2004*

a) omit from *The Book of Discipline* all paragraphs or parts thereof which have been repealed, whether expressly, specifically or by necessary implication, or which have expired or have become spent or have had effect; *Adopted 2004*

b) incorporate into any paragraph of *The Book of Discipline* or part thereof any amendment made necessary, whether expressly, specifically or by necessary implication, pursuant to the enactment of any legislation by the General Conference; *Adopted 2004*

c) order and arrange within *The Book of Discipline* the grouping and sequence of paragraphs or parts thereof, including power to: (1) consolidate into one or more paragraphs any two or more paragraphs or parts thereof which are *in pari materia*, making such amendments and/or alterations as are thereby rendered necessary in the consolidated paragraphs; (2) divide any one paragraph or part thereof into any two or more paragraphs or parts thereof, making such amendments and/or alterations as are thereby rendered necessary in the divided paragraphs: (3) alter the form of arrangement of any paragraph or part thereof by transposing words, by combining it in whole or in part with another paragraph or other paragraphs or parts thereof or by dividing it into two or more paragraphs or parts thereof; and/or (4) renumber the paragraphs or parts thereof; *Adopted 2004*

d) correct clerical, grammatical, printing, typographical and similar mistakes in any part of *The Book of Discipline* and to make verbal additions, omissions, alterations and/or editorial changes not affecting the meaning of the same; *Adopted 2004*

e) make such formal alterations as to names, offices, title and otherwise as may be necessary to bring *The Book of Discipline* into conformity with the current circumstances of The Methodist Church in Singapore; *Adopted 2004* *ed. 2020*

f) correct cross-references; *Adopted 2004*

g) standardise the phraseology used in *The Book of Discipline* and to delete any words, expressions and/or nomenclature which have expired or become obsolete and to substitute therefore, where necessary, appropriate words, expressions and/or nomenclature; and *Adopted 2004*

h) do all other things relating to form and method reasonably necessitated by or consequential upon the exercise by the Commission of any of the aforesaid powers or which may be necessary for the perfecting of a revised edition of *The Book of Discipline*. *Adopted 2004*

4. *Publication.* Upon completion of a revised edition of *The Book of Discipline*, the Commission shall authorise the same to be published in such manner as it considers appropriate (including but not limited to publication in physical, electronic and/or digital mode) and made available to any member of The Methodist Church in Singapore. Copyright to a revised edition of *The Book of Discipline* shall be held in the name of The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore. The Commission may (if it thinks necessary) authorise the publication of a temporary edition of *The Book of Discipline*, which shall be replaced by the revised edition when completed. *Adopted 2004* *Am. 2026* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

5. *Copies.* Upon publication of a revised edition of *The Book of Discipline*, the Commission shall present a copy thereof to the bishop, the General Conference secretary, the presidents, lay leaders and secretaries of the Annual Conferences, the archivist of The Methodist Church in Singapore, every member of the Commission and every member of the Commission serving during the previous quadrennium. The General Conference secretary shall provide a copy of the newly published revised edition of *The Book of Discipline* to every General Conference delegate (substantive and alternate) serving at the time of publication. The General Conference secretary shall table each newly published revised edition of *The Book of Discipline* to be received by the General Conference at the first available (regular or special) session after *Adopted 2004* *ed. 2020*

publication. For the avoidance of doubt, reference in this provision to "copy" refers to a copy (whether in physical, digital or electronic form) as published by the Commission. *Am. 2026*

6. *Announcement of Publication.* The Council on Communications shall cause an announcement of the publication of a revised edition to appear in the first available issue of the Methodist Message. *Adopted 2004*

7. *Inclusion of Other Material.* A revised edition of *The Book of Discipline* may, at the discretion of the Commission, also contain a reprint of such other material (not being part of *The Book of Discipline* itself) as the Commission considers useful to include *provided always* that it shall be made clear that such other material is not part of *The Book of Discipline*. *Adopted 2004*

8. *Rectification of Errors.* Notwithstanding publication of a revised edition of *The Book of Discipline*, the Commission may at any time it thinks fit rectify (by issuing of a rectification order) any clerical or printing error appearing in a revised edition. Copies of a rectification order so issued shall forthwith be given to each of the persons listed in ¶388.5 and, upon the direction of the Commission, the Council on Communications shall cause notice of a rectification order to appear in the first available issue of the Methodist Message. Copies of a rectification order shall be appended to all copies of a revised edition of *The Book of Discipline* sold after such rectification order has been issued. *Adopted 2004*

Section XIII. Council of Governance

Adopted 2008

¶389. 1. The Council of Governance shall be amenable to the General Conference. The Council of Governance shall comprise the chairperson and not less than two and not more than six other members, who shall not concurrently be the General Conference treasurer or the chairperson of the Finance and Administration Council. The chairperson (pursuant to ¶313.1m)) and members of the Council of Governance shall be elected by the General Conference. *Am. 2012* *Adopted 2008*

2. The terms of reference of the Council of Governance should *Am. 2012*

be approved by the General Conference and documented in the General Conference journal. The Council of Governance shall review its terms of reference as and when required. It shall recommend any changes to its terms of reference to the General Conference for approval. *Adopted 2008*

3. Unless otherwise resolved by the General Conference, such terms of reference shall include the responsibility to: *Adopted 2008*

a) review the audit plans of the external auditors; *Adopted 2008*

b) review the external auditors' reports on the financial statements and their management letter on internal controls; *Adopted 2008*

c) review the cooperation given by staff to the external auditors; *Adopted 2008*

d) review, to the extent feasible, the adequacy of internal controls and the scope and results of the internal audit procedures (if any); *Adopted 2008*

e) nominate external auditors for appointment by the General Conference; *Adopted 2008*

f) review compliance with such functions and duties as may be required under the relevant statutes or the Charities Act, and by such amendments made thereto from time to time; *Adopted 2008*

g) review interested persons' transactions and procedures on awarding contracts to interested parties; *Am. 2012* *Adopted 2008*

h) review the remuneration packages of employees who are related to General Conference Executive Council members; *Adopted 2008*

i) review the financial manual for adoption by the General Conference and monitor compliance thereof; *Adopted 2008*

j) investigate matters in its terms of reference, and shall have access to and have the cooperation of employees and the General Conference Executive Council. The Council of Governance shall have the discretion to invite General Conference Executive Committee members or employees to attend its meetings, as well as to requisition reasonable resources to enable it to discharge its functions effectively; *Adopted 2008*

k) review the appropriateness of the financial reserves policy (if any); *ed. 2013* *Adopted 2008*

l) facilitate the work of the Church Governance Committees of the local churches and the Boards of Governance of the Annual Conferences; *Adopted 2012 ed. 2016 Am. 2024*

m) review risk management policy, procedures and reports; and

n) oversee whistle-blowing policy and procedures.

4. The Council of Governance shall meet at least twice a year, and as and when required. *Adopted 2012*

Section XIIIA. Council on Nominations

¶390. 1. The Council on Nominations shall be amenable to the General Conference. The Council shall be re-constituted at the beginning of each General Conference quadrennium (¶310.2) and shall comprise: *Adopted 2016*

a) the bishop, who shall be the chairperson;

b) the presidents of the Annual Conferences;

c) one minister from each Annual Conference appointed by the Executive Board of each Annual Conference at the Annual Conference regular session during the year of the regular session of the General Conference (but after the election of the president); and

d) one lay person elected by the Executive Board of each Annual Conference at the Annual Conference regular session during the year of the regular session of the General Conference (but after the election of the president).

2. The terms of reference of the Council on Nominations for the forthcoming quadrennium should be approved by the General Conference and documented in the General Conference journal. The Council shall review its terms of reference as and when required. It shall recommend any changes to its terms of reference to the General Conference for approval.

3. Unless otherwise resolved by the General Conference, such terms of reference shall include:

a) nominating suitable persons to be elected or appointed to serve as General Conference officers or as the chairpersons or members of General Conference councils or agencies;

b) advising the bishop in making connectional appointments

or assignments and extra-Methodist Church appointments or assignments pursuant to ¶579.5;

c) advising the General Conference Executive Council and/or the Finance and Administration Council on appointments or assignment of persons when the advice of the Council on Nominations is sought by them; and *Adopted 2016*

d) such other nominating tasks as may be assigned to the Council on Nominations by the General Conference.

4. In recognition of the independence of the judicial authority of The Methodist Church in Singapore vested in the Judicial Council, the Council on Nominations shall not be consulted and shall not advise on nominations for the membership of the Judicial Council.

5. The Council on Nominations shall not have the exclusive privilege of nomination and no nomination by the Council shall preclude an election or appointment or assignment (by the General Conference or the relevant General Conference council or agency or the bishop) of any person who was not nominated by the Council. *ed. 2017*

6. The Council on Nominations shall take into account the giftings, qualifications, experience and abilities (in both secular life and in the various parts of the Methodist connection) of the persons it considers for nomination and shall strive to give due regard to the need to facilitate reasonable representation of persons coming from different backgrounds and parts of the Methodist connection in Singapore. It shall also take into account the need to ensure leadership renewal.

7. The Council on Nominations shall serve through the quadrennium and shall meet at least once a year, and more frequently as and when required.

8. The Council may appoint such persons as it thinks fit (including an employee or staff member) as its recording secretary but in the absence of such appointment, the General Conference secretary shall serve as its recording secretary with voice but without vote.

Section XIV. Affiliation and Ecumenical Participation

¶391. The Malaysian and Singapore components of the former Chinese Annual Conference, the Singapore Malaya Annual Conference and the Tamil Provisional Annual Conference may maintain such ties as they mutually desire.

¶392. 1. The Methodist Church in Singapore may seek affiliation with other Methodist Churches throughout the world and seek membership in the World Methodist Council, the Asian Methodist Council, the National Council of Churches of Singapore, the Christian Conference of Asia and the World Council of Churches. *ed. 2006* *Am. 2016*

2. The Methodist Church in Singapore shall establish an affiliated autonomous status with the United Methodist Church in the United States of America and enter into contractual agreements.

3. The contractual agreements between the Church and The United Methodist Church include the following provisions:

a) Certificates of church membership given by ministers in one church shall be accepted by ministers in the other.

b) Ministers may be transferred between Annual and Provisional Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church in Singapore and of the United Methodist Church and of affiliated autonomous Methodist Churches, with the approval and consent of the bishops or other appointive authorities involved. *ed. 2020*

c) Each affiliated autonomous church shall be entitled to two delegates, a minister and a lay person, to the General Conference of The United Methodist Church, with all the rights and privileges of delegates, including membership on committees, except the right to vote. Such a church having more than 70,000 full members shall be entitled to two additional delegates, at least one of whom shall be a woman, with the same rights and privileges. Subject to the Organisational Rules of The United Methodist Church (USA), The Methodist Church in Singapore shall be entitled to send two delegates, a minister and a lay person to the World Methodist Conference and General Conference of The United Methodist Church provided always that such delegates shall be entitled to *ed. 2020*

claim from the General Administration Fund of The United Methodist Church travel and *per diem* allowances for attendance at any one but not both of such meetings at any one time.

d) The United Methodist Church may be represented at the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore by a member of the Council of Bishops and by a delegate appointed by the General Board of Global Ministries, World Division, the delegates to be entitled to all the privileges of delegates except the right to vote. *ed. 2020*

Section XV. Commitment to Renewal and a Wider Unity

¶393. One of the spheres in which the uniting Spirit of God can be discerned in the world today is in the various moves for the visible re-union of Christ's body. There is great cause for gratitude to God where such moves are accompanied by the complete openness to the renewing and transforming presence of Christ's love in them. In seeking to witness to "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all", the Church is starting to face fundamental questions about its own form and organisation. Methodists here as elsewhere acknowledge that denominationalism, whatever its justification in the past, falls short of Christ's call to unity, history and the future of the faith we confess. The Church will make its greatest contribution to nation-building and the renewal of society when it allows its own life to be renewed in faith and obedience to its Lord.

¶394. From its inception as an autonomous body, The Methodist Church in Singapore commits itself to seeking that renewal and unity which God wills for it, and believes that this involves seeking a visible form of unity under the inspiration of Christ's prayer that all His people be one. The call is to inter-communion dialogue and joint action in mission, but more important, it is for the willingness of the Church to give its very life for the wider purpose of God. What these purposes may be, and when fulfilled, He alone knows at this time; the Church's responsibility is to listen and act in obedience. *ed. 2020*

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Chapter Four
CHURCH PROPERTY AND TRUSTEES

Section I. All Titles – In Trust

¶401. *Title to Properties.* Under the Constitution and disciplinary procedures set forth in *The Book of Discipline*, The Methodist Church in Singapore, as a denominational whole, is not an entity, nor does it possess legal capacities and attributes. With particular reference to its lack of capacity to hold title to property, The Methodist Church in Singapore is organised as a connectional structure. All real property, shares, bonds and other registrable property of the General, Annual, District and Local Conferences, agencies, institutions, or organisations of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall be held in trust by The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore. Notwithstanding the foregoing, agencies, institutions or organisations that have been constituted with legal capacity and attributes may, with the approval in writing of The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore, upon the consent of the General Conference Executive Council, hold property in their own names subject to such terms and requirements as may be imposed in writing by The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020* *Am. 2026*

¶402. *Use of the Name "Methodist".* The word "Methodist" shall not be used as, or part of, a trade name or trademark, or as a part of the name of any business or organisation, except by a corporation, company or other business created for the administration of work undertaken directly by The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

Section II. Compliance with Law

¶403. *Conformity of Discipline with Local Law.* All provisions of The Methodist Church in Singapore relating to the formation and operation of any corporation, and relating to real property, are conditional upon their being in conformity with the local laws; and in the event of conflict therewith, the local laws shall prevail; provided, however, that this requirement shall not be construed to give the consent of The Methodist Church in Singapore to deprivation of the property without due process of law, or to the regulation of its affairs by statute where such regulation violates the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion; and provided further that the services of worship of every church shall be open to all persons without regard to race or national origin. *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

¶404. *Financial Obligations.* No conference, council, board, agency, local church or other unit can financially obligate The Methodist Church in Singapore or, without specific consent, any other organisational unit thereof (¶323). *ed. 2020*

Section III. The Methodist Corporation

¶405. The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore, a body corporate incorporated by and under the Methodist Episcopal Location Board Ordinance, Cap. 368 (1985 Revised Edition) shall be the successor to all right, title and interest in and to all assets of The Methodist Church in Singapore or its conferences, agencies, organisations or other church units. *ed. 2020*

¶406. 1. The General Conference shall elect (for appointment by the Council of Trustees) a Methodist to be The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore who shall hold office for the quadrennium or until a successor is appointed. The Secretary of the Trustees shall report to the Council of Trustees (¶¶383–385). *ed. 2009* *Am. 2016* *ed. 2020*

2. The name of the person so appointed and any change thereof shall be notified to the relevant authority for notification in the Government Gazette and to the Commissioner of Charities. *Am. 2026*

3. The Secretary of the Trustees (¶313.1j)) elected by the General Conference and appointed by the Council of Trustees (¶¶383–385) shall be assisted by such assistant secretaries (if any) as elected by the General Conference on recommendation by The Secretary of the Trustees. The Council of Trustees may appoint one or more of the assistant secretaries and/or such other Methodists as the General Conference Executive Council may nominate as attorneys for The Secretary of the Trustees. *Adopted 2008* *ed. 2016* *Am. 2016*

Section IV. Episcopal Residence

¶407. The General Conference may acquire for its bishop an episcopal residence, or it may designate any suitable property it possesses as an episcopal residence.

Section V. General Provisions

¶408. Instruments conveying, transferring title, contract, deed, bill of sale, mortgage or other necessary legal document shall be executed by affixing the seal of The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore in the presence of The Secretary of the Trustees or his attorney. *Am. 2008* *ed. 2009*

¶409. Legal documents executed by The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore shall be pursuant to a resolution by the council, board, or committee on whose behalf the document is executed.

¶410. 1. The real property held by The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore shall not be mortgaged to provide funds for any operating expenses of The Methodist Church, or of any institution, agency, organisation or programme therein, nor shall the principal proceeds of the sale of any such property be so used. *ed. 2009* *ed. 2026* *Am. 2024*

2. The address of each real property held by The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore and any change thereof shall be notified to the Commissioner of Charities. *Am. 2026*

Section VI. Building, Purchasing, Remodelling

¶411. 1. *Approval of Purchase, Construction or Remodelling Plans or Lease or Licence of Properties and/or Buildings.* Except with the prior approval or authorisation of the General Conference Executive Council, no constituent entity or other unit of The Methodist Church in Singapore (including any annual conference, council, board, agency, local church or other unit howsoever called and no corporate body, society or other entity organised by authority of The Methodist Church in Singapore or which is under the direction of The Methodist Church in Singapore or any of its constituent entities) shall, in respect of any property and/or building, authorise or enter into any binding commitment for: *ed. 2013* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

a) purchase;

b) construction or remodelling (including any alteration or extension of any existing structure); or

c) lease or licence (for any period exceeding one year's duration).

2. The General Conference Executive Council shall establish procedures to be followed by constituent entities and other units to obtain its approval pursuant to ¶411.1 and may authorise a constituent entity or other unit to grant such approval on its behalf subject always to such conditions as it may prescribe.

3. No constituent entity or other unit shall submit a proposal for approval or authorisation pursuant to ¶411 without:

a) obtaining the consent of its plenary body (e.g. in the case of a local church, its Local Conference) but (where the relevant entity is a local church) the relevant entity need not obtain approval from its local conference where the project expenditure (on a substantially fixed price basis including allowance for all cost overruns) does not exceed 10% of the average annual income of the relevant entity over the last three years; and *Am. 2007*

b) providing a statement of the need for the proposed facilities, preliminary architectural plans, an estimate of the costs and a financial plan for defraying such costs. A financial plan shall

include cash flow projections and indication of the sources of funds (e.g. donations, personal guarantees, pledges and interest-free loans from members).

Section VII. Sale, Transfer, Lease or Mortgage of Property

¶412. 1. No local church shall be sold, transferred or leased for a term which exceeds 20 years, or mortgaged without the consent of the Local Conference and the president and district superintendents.

2. No Annual Conference property shall be sold, transferred or leased for a term that exceeds 20 years, or mortgaged without the consent of the Annual Conference.

3. No General Conference property shall be sold, transferred or leased for a term that exceeds 20 years, or mortgaged without the consent of the General Conference. *Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 2 of 2015*

Section VIII. Dissolution

¶413. In the event of dissolution of The Methodist Church in Singapore, all debts and liabilities properly incurred by and on behalf of the Church shall be fully discharged and the remaining funds and assets of the Church shall be donated to any Christian church or other organisation for the advancement of the Christian religion or other charitable organisation registered under the Charities Act. *ed. 2020*

¶414. 1. No Local Conference shall be dissolved except in accordance with ¶414.2. *ed. 2013 Adopted 2004*

2. A Local Conference may be dissolved: *Adopted 2004*

a) by a motion of dissolution duly proposed and seconded at a meeting of the Local Conference (or, at the discretion of the district superintendent pursuant to ¶148, of the Church Conference) of which not less than 28 days' notice of such meeting and notice of such motion has been given and subject to such notice having been published at least twice in the church bulletin (if any) of all local churches of that Local Conference provided always that no such *Adopted 2004*

motion shall be passed without the affirmative vote of not less than three-fourths of those eligible to vote and present at such meeting. If so passed, such motion of dissolution shall take effect after such motion receives the concurrence of a simple majority of the delegates of the Annual Conference to which the Local Conference belongs and shall take effect from such date as the Annual Conference shall specify; or

b) without the concurrence of the Local Conference concerned, by a motion of dissolution duly proposed and seconded at a meeting of the Annual Conference to which the Local Conference belongs of which not less than 28 days' notice of such meeting and notice of such motion has been given and subject to all local churches of all the Local Conferences of that Annual Conference having been directed by the Executive Board to publish such notice at least twice in their church bulletins (if any) ahead of such meeting provided always that no such motion shall be proposed for adoption by the Annual Conference without the support of the Executive Board (expressed with a three-fourths vote of concurrence) and no such motion shall be passed without the affirmative vote of not less than three-fourths of the total number of delegates of the Annual Conference. If so passed, such motion of dissolution shall take effect from such date as the Annual Conference shall specify.

3. In the event of dissolution of a Local Conference, all debts and liabilities properly incurred by and on behalf of that Local Conference shall be fully discharged and the remaining funds and assets of that Local Conference shall be vested for the benefit of the Annual Conference to which the Local Conference belongs or as the Annual Conference otherwise specifies.

¶415. In the event of dissolution of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore, any Annual Conference or any Local Conference, notice of dissolution shall be given to the Commissioner of Charities within seven days of such dissolution. *Am. 2026*

Chapter Five
THE MINISTRY

Section I. The Nature of Ministry

¶501. 1. Ministry in the Christian Church is derived from the ministry of the Father through the Incarnate Son by the Holy Spirit. It is a ministry bestowed upon and required of the Church. All Christians are called to ministry and theirs is a ministry of the people of God within the community of faith and in the world. Members of The Methodist Church in Singapore receive this gift of ministry in company with all Christians and sincerely hope to continue and extend it in the world for which Christ lived, died and lives again. The Methodist Church in Singapore believes that Baptism, Confirmation and responsive membership in the church are visible signs of this ministry. *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

2. Both men and women are included in all provisions of *The Book of Discipline* which refer to the ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶507.2]*

Section II. The Local Ministry

¶502. *Local Preachers.* The local ministry is the system of The Methodist Church in Singapore in which the local preachers are members. *Am. 2004* *[2002 Ed. ¶507.3]* *ed. 2020*

¶503. 1. A local preacher is a lay member of The Methodist Church in Singapore who has been granted a licence to preach according to the Discipline of the Church. He continues to be a lay member of a local church and is permitted to exercise his ministry in any charge within the Annual Conference which authorises him to preach, with the invitation and under the supervision of the minister in charge, or in the local church to which he is appointed as a supply pastor. *[2002 Ed. ¶509]* *ed. 2020*

2. A member of The Methodist Church in Singapore authorised to preach shall possess a valid licence stating how far he *[2002 Ed. ¶507.1]* *ed. 2020*

is empowered by an Annual Conference in his official functions and signed by the district superintendent and the president of the annual or provisional Annual Conferences.

¶504. *Duties.* 1. A local preacher has authority to preach and to conduct divine worship. *[2002 Ed. ¶510.1]*

2. A local preacher who is not appointed to a church may assist his minister, at the request and under the supervision of the minister, subject to the requirements of *The Book of Discipline*. *[2002 Ed. ¶510.2]*

3. A local preacher who is not appointed to a church may serve under a district superintendent either by temporary appointment or by becoming an approved supply pastor. *[2002 Ed. ¶510.3]*

4. A local preacher who is not appointed to a church under a district superintendent shall be a member of, and amenable to, the Local Conference in which he is a member, except as hereinafter stated. When he changes his membership, he shall procure from his minister or district superintendent a certificate of his official standing and dismissal and shall present it to the minister of the charge to which he has moved. If he neglects to do this, he shall not be recognised or use his office as a local preacher in the church to which he has moved; and he shall continue to be amenable to the Local Conference from which he has moved. *ed. 2006* *[2002 Ed. ¶510.4]*

5. A local preacher, other than a student defined in ¶504.6, who is appointed to serve under a district superintendent as supply pastor shall procure from his minister or district superintendent a certificate of his official standing and dismissal, and shall present it to the Local Conference to which he is appointed at its next session. His church membership shall be in that church to which he is appointed; and he shall be a member of, and amenable to its Local Conference, subject to the jurisdiction of the Annual Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶510.5]*

6. A local preacher who is serving as student supply pastor while attending a college or seminary accredited or approved by The Methodist Church in Singapore may retain his membership in his home church and Local Conference, but in the discharge of his ministerial functions he shall be amenable to the district superintendent under whom he serves. *[2002 Ed. ¶510.6]* *ed. 2020*

7. Whenever a local preacher severs his relationship with The Methodist Church in Singapore, the district superintendent shall require his licence and credentials of him, and shall file them with the Registrar of the Board of Ministry. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶510.7] ed. 2020*

8. A local preacher not serving a church shall make to the Local Conference a report of his labour as follows: *[2002 Ed. ¶510.8]*

a) number of sermons preached; *[2002 Ed. ¶510.8a)]*

b) number of funerals conducted, with the names of deceased; *[2002 Ed. ¶510.8b)]*

c) evangelistic, education and missionary work done in cooperation with and under the direction of his minister; *[2002 Ed. ¶510.8c)]*

d) progress made in academic work or in the prescribed course of study; *[2002 Ed. ¶510.8d)]*

e) miscellaneous items. *[2002 Ed. ¶510.8e)]*

A copy of this report shall be filed with the Registrar of the Board of Ministry.

¶505. *Qualifications.* A local preacher must possess a licence to preach. A licence may be granted to a member of The Methodist Church in Singapore after he has qualified in the following ways: *[2002 Ed. ¶511] ed. 2020*

1. He has been a member in good standing of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *[2002 Ed. ¶511.1] ed. 2020*

2. He has completed his secondary school education or equivalent, and attained the age of 25. Each Annual Conference shall establish its own educational requirements. The Board of Ministry may make recommendations in particular cases. *[2002 Ed. ¶511.2]*

3. He has completed the course of study prescribed by his Annual Conference for the licence to preach including study of *The Book of Discipline*. This course shall be taken under the supervision of the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶511.3]*

4. He has secured the recommendation of his Local Conference by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Local Conference present and voting. *[2002 Ed. ¶511.4]*

5. He has made an application in writing to the district superintendent. *[2002 Ed. ¶511.5]*

6. He has prepared a written statement describing his age, health, Christian experience with emphasis upon his experience in the church, call to preach, purpose in seeking a licence to preach, certified educational record and education plans. *[2002 Ed. ¶511.6]*

7. He has appeared before the Board of Ministry, held himself amenable to any psychological and aptitude tests it may require and provide, and supplied such other information as it may require for determining his gifts, graces and potential usefulness. *[2002 Ed. ¶511.7]*

8. He has agreed, for the sake of a disciplined example, to make a complete dedication of himself to the highest ideals of the Christian Ministry with respect to purity of life in body, in mind and in spirit, and to bear witness thereto by abstinence from all indulgences, including alcoholic beverages and tobacco, which may injure his influence. *[2002 Ed. ¶511.8]*

9. He has been examined publicly as indicated in ¶506.1. *[2002 Ed. ¶511.9]*

¶506. 1. *Examination for Licence to Preach.* The candidate for a licence to preach shall be examined by the Board of Ministry. He shall be asked the following questions: *[2002 Ed. ¶512.1]*

a) Do you believe yourself to be divinely called to preach the gospel? *[2002 Ed. ¶512.1a)]*

b) Have you obtained the pardon of your sins and found peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ; and is the Spirit of God bearing witness with your spirit that you are a child of God? *[2002 Ed. ¶512.1b)]*

c) Is it your sincere purpose to seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness? *[2002 Ed. ¶512.1c)]*

d) Are you acquainted with the Doctrines and the Discipline of The Methodist Church in Singapore? *[2002 Ed. ¶512.1d)] ed. 2020*

e) Do you understand the Doctrines and the Discipline of The Methodist Church in Singapore, and will you defend and follow them? *[2002 Ed. ¶512.1e)] ed. 2020*

2. *Validation of Licence.* A licence to preach shall be valid for one year. It may be renewed, as provided in the Discipline, on recommendation of the person's Local Conference, and on evidence that his gifts, graces and usefulness continue to be *[2002 Ed. ¶512.2]*

satisfactory and that he is making regular progress in the required studies, as follows:

a) A local preacher who is enrolled as a pre-theological or theological student in a school, college, university or seminary accredited or approved by The Methodist Church in Singapore, preparing to become a deacon shall present annually to the Board of Ministry a statement of his academic progress from the school he is attending. This statement shall take the place of any formal examination, provided his academic progress and character are satisfactory. *[2002 Ed. ¶512.2a)]* *ed. 2020*

b) A local preacher who is not a student as defined in a) shall pursue the Annual Conference course of study under the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶512.2b)]*

c) A local preacher who is not a student as defined in a) and b) shall give a statement of his private study including the number of theological books read during the year. *[2002 Ed. ¶512.2c)]*

d) When a licence to preach has lapsed, it may be reinstated only at the discretion of the Board of Ministry, when or if the candidate has completed satisfactorily the current studies for the licence to preach. *[2002 Ed. ¶512.2d)]*

e) A local preacher shall be required to complete further prescribed reading under the direction of the Board of Ministry. Satisfactory completion of this requirement should be stated at the time when the Board of Ministry considers the renewal of his licence. *[2002 Ed. ¶512.2e)]*

¶507. An approved supply pastor is a local preacher who on recommendation of the Board of Ministry has been approved by the Annual Conference as eligible for appointment during the ensuing year as a supply pastor of a church. The approval shall be based on compliance with ¶¶505–506 (except as provided in ¶510.3) and ¶¶508–510 and shall expire unless renewed on the same basis at the next regular conference session. It does not guarantee an appointment, but merely certifies eligibility. An appointment made thereunder may be terminated at any time during the conference year by a majority vote of the district superintendents. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶513]*

¶508. 1. A local preacher desiring to become, or to continue as *Am. 2004*

approved supply pastor must have his character, fitness, training and effectiveness passed by a three-fourths majority of the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶514.1]*

2. Between Annual Conference sessions a local preacher not on the approved supply pastors list may be appointed as supply pastor. If he fails to be approved at the following Annual Conference session, he cannot thereafter serve as supply pastor until he is approved. *[2002 Ed. ¶514.2]*

¶509. 1. On recommendation of the Board of Ministry, the Annual Conference may approve annually students of other denominations enrolled in a seminary accredited or approved by The Methodist Church in Singapore to serve as supply pastors for the ensuing year under the supervision of a district superintendent. *[2002 Ed. ¶515.1]* *ed. 2020*

2. On recommendation of the Board of Ministry the Annual Conference may also approve annually ministers in good standing in other evangelical denominations to serve as supply pastors while retaining their denominational affiliation, provided that they shall agree in writing to support and maintain the doctrines and polity of The Methodist Church in Singapore and to promote the programme of the Church while so serving. Their ordination credentials may be recognised as valid in The Methodist Church in Singapore while they are serving therein. *[2002 Ed. ¶515.2]* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

¶510. In recommending to the Annual Conference those who have met the requirements to become approved supply pastors for the ensuing year, the Board of Ministry shall classify them in three categories with educational requirements as hereinafter specified. Every approved supply pastor shall meet the educational requirements of his category. Any preacher who fails to meet these requirements shall not be appointed by the Board of Appointments. The categories shall be as follows: *[2002 Ed. ¶516]*

1. Those eligible to be appointed as student approved supply pastors. These shall be enrolled as pre-theological or theological students, under the definitions and requirements of *The Book of Discipline*. *[2002 Ed. ¶516.1]*

2. Those eligible to be appointed as full-time approved supply *[2002 Ed. ¶516.2]*

pastors. A full-time approved supply pastor is a local preacher: a) who meets the provisions; b) who has met the educational requirements set by the Board of Ministry; c) who devotes his entire service to the church to which he is appointed; and d) whose cash support per annum from all church sources is a sum equivalent to not less than the minimum salary established by the Annual Conference for full-time approved supply pastors.

3. Those eligible to be appointed as part-time approved supply pastors. A part-time approved supply pastor is one: a) who does not devote his entire service to the church to which he is appointed; and b) who does not receive cash support per annum from all church sources a sum equivalent to the minimum salary established by the Annual Conference for full-time approved supply pastors. A person who has met the qualifications for approval as supply pastor may request to be classified as eligible to be appointed as part-time approved pastor for the ensuing year. *[2002 Ed. ¶516.3]*

¶511. 1. An approved supply pastor, only while serving as an appointed pastor of a charge, may be permitted to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper and, if the laws of the state permit, to perform the marriage ceremony within the bounds of the church to which he is assigned. Authorisation must be given in writing by the bishop under whom he serves after approval by the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶517.1]*

2. A part-time approved supply pastor shall be authorised, while serving as a regularly appointed pastor of a church, to administer the Sacrament of Baptism, and if the laws of the state permit, to perform the marriage ceremony within the bounds of the church to which he is assigned. In the case of an approved supply pastor and a part-time approved supply pastor serving in the same church, such authorisation, if specially given, should go to the approved supply pastor. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶517.2]*

3. An approved supply pastor who is in full charge of a pastoral appointment shall attend sessions of the Annual Conference. He shall have the right to vote in the Annual Conference on all matters except matters of ordination, character *[2002 Ed. ¶517.3]*

and conference relations of ministers. He may serve on any board, commission or committee of the annual and other conferences, except the Board of Ministry. He shall be eligible for election as a lay delegate to the General Conference.

4. When a local preacher is an approved supply pastor, the Annual Conference alone has jurisdiction over his authority to preach. Continuance in this relationship shall be equivalent to renewal of his licence to preach. If at any time the Annual Conference declines to renew its approval of a supply pastor, the Board of Ministry may renew the licence to preach for one year; further renewal shall be subject to the provisions of *The Book of Discipline*. *[2002 Ed. ¶517.4]*

Section III. The Diaconal Ministry

¶512. 1. The New Testament witness to Jesus Christ makes clear that the primary form of his ministry, in God's name, was that of service (*diakonia*) in the world. Very early in its history the Church came to understand that all of its members were commissioned, in baptism, to ministries of love, justice and service, within local congregations and the larger communities in which they lived; all who follow Jesus have a share in the ministry of Jesus, who came not to be served, but to serve. There is thus a general ministry of all baptised Christians. *[2002 Ed. ¶602.1]*

2. The Church also affirms that particular persons are called and set apart for representative ministries of leadership within the body, to help the whole of the membership of the Church be engaged in and fulfil its ministry of service. The purpose of such leadership is the equipping of the general ministry of the Church, to the end that the whole church may be built up as the Body of Christ for the work of ministry. This set-apart ministry is not a substitute for the diaconal responsibility of all members of the general ministry. Rather, it exists to intensify and make more effective the self-understanding of the whole people of God as servants in Christ's name. *[2002 Ed. ¶602.2]*

¶513. The words *deacon, deaconess, diaconate* and *diaconal* *[2002 Ed. ¶603]*

all spring from a common Greek root – *diakonia*, or "service". Very early in its history the Church instituted an order of ordained ministers to personify or focus the servanthood to which all Christians are called. These people were named deacons. Those who are called to this representative ministry of service in the Church and world may be set apart to the office of diaconal minister. This ministry exemplifies the servanthood every Christian is called to live in both Church and world. Participating with the elder in the leadership of worship, working in a serving-profession in the church, and serving the needs of the poor, the sick or oppressed, the diaconal minister embodies the unity of the congregation's worship with its life in the world.

¶514. Diaconal ministers are called to specialised ministries of service, justice and love for persons. Diaconal ministers focus their service through a variety of ministries, such as administration, education, evangelism, music, health and community development. Christ's service to humankind and the Church's responsibility for continuing that service in the world are both symbolised and enabled especially, but not exclusively, in diaconal ministry. Diaconal ministry exists to intensify and make more effective the self-understanding of the whole people of God as servants in Christ's name. *[2002 Ed. ¶601.2]*

¶515. The diaconal ministry is recognised by The Methodist Church in Singapore as a called-out and set-apart ministry. Therefore, it is appropriate that those persons who present themselves as candidates for diaconal ministry be examined regarding the authenticity of the call by God to this office. Accordingly, let those who consider recommending such persons for candidacy as diaconal ministers in The Methodist Church in Singapore prayerfully and earnestly ask themselves these historic questions, as applied to the nature of diaconal ministry: *[2002 Ed. ¶604] ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation? *[2002 Ed. ¶604.1]*

2. Have they gifts, as well as evidence of God's graces, for the work of diaconal ministry? Have they the love of God abiding in *[2002 Ed. ¶604.2]*

them? Do they show forth that love in services to others? Have they an abiding sense of the urgency for justice in the world?

3. Have they fruit? Are others edified by their service? *[2002 Ed. ¶604.3]*

4. As long as these signs are visible in them, we believe they are called of God to serve. These we receive as sufficient proof that they are moved by the Holy Spirit. *[2002 Ed. ¶604.4]*

¶516. 1. Since the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching, self-avowed practising homosexuals are not to be accepted as candidates, ordained as diaconal ministers or approved to serve in The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Adopted 2004 ed. 2020*

2. Every diaconal minister of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall accept that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teachings. *Adopted 2004 ed. 2020*

¶517. *Candidacy for Ministry*. A person seeking to enter the diaconal ministry of The Methodist Church in Singapore, upon hearing and heeding the call to serve, shall take the first formal step toward the ministry by qualifying as a candidate. The person thus is under the care and supervision of the Board of Ministry. Each diaconal minister candidate shall have: *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶605] ed. 2020*

1. Agreed for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness to the Christian gospel, and in consideration of his/her influence as a minister, to make a complete dedication of himself/herself to the highest ideals of the Christian life. *[2002 Ed. ¶605.1]*

2. Been a member in good standing of a local Methodist congregation for at least one year immediately preceding the application for candidacy. *[2002 Ed. ¶605.2]*

3. Received formal theological education recognised by the Annual Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶605.3]*

4. A licence to preach. *Adopted 2004*

5. Presented a satisfactory certificate of good health by a physician. *[2002 Ed. ¶605.4]*

6. Been supported by a letter of recommendation by the Local Church Executive Committee and the pastor(s). *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed.¶605.5]*

7. Applied in writing to the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶605.6]*

8. Appeared before the Board of Ministry, made himself/herself available for any psychological and aptitude tests it may require, and completed the studies exploring the spiritual, professional, academic and personal potentialities as recommended by the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶605.7]*

9. Been recommended by a three-fourths majority vote by the Board of Ministry. *Adopted 2004*

10. Been approved by a three-fourths majority vote of the ministerial session of the Annual Conference. *Adopted 2004*

¶518. *Completion of Candidacy.* 1. A diaconal minister candidate shall be eligible for ordination as a diaconal minister in the Annual Conference by a three-fourths majority vote of the ministerial session of the Annual Conference after meeting the following requirements. Each candidate shall have: *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶606]*

a) Been in candidacy for diaconal ministry for at least two years. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶606.1]*

b) Responded to a written doctrinal examination administered by the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6]*

c) Had a personal interview with the Board of Ministry to complete his/her candidacy. *[2002 Ed. ¶606.4]*

d) Been recommended for ordination by a three-fourths majority vote of the Board of Ministry. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶606.2]*

The examination must cover the following:

(1) Describe your personal experience of God and the understanding of God you derive from biblical, theological and historical sources. *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6a)]*

(2) What is the Christian understanding of humanity, and the human need for divine grace? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6b)]*

(3) How do you interpret the statement “Jesus Christ is Lord”? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6c)]*

(4) What is your conception of the activity of the Holy Spirit in personal faith, in the community of believers and in responsible living in the world? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6d)]*

(5) The Methodist Church in Singapore holds that Scripture, tradition, experience and reason are sources and norms for belief and practice, and that the Bible is primary among them. What is your understanding of this theological position of the Church? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6e)] ed. 2020*

(6) What are the marks of the Christian life? What is your understanding of the Christian life as set forth in the Articles of Religion and the Social Principles in *The Book of Discipline* of The Methodist Church in Singapore? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6f)] ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

(7) Describe the nature and mission of the Church. What are its primary tasks today? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6g)]*

(8) What is your understanding of: i) the Kingdom of God; ii) the Resurrection; and iii) eternal life? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6h)]*

(9) How do you perceive yourself, your gifts, your motives, your role and your commitment as a diaconal minister? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6i)]*

(10) What is the meaning and significance of *diakonia*? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6j)]*

(11) What is the meaning of commissioning and ordination, especially in the context of the general ministry of the Church? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6k)]*

(12) What is your understanding of the organisation, structure and function of The Methodist Church in Singapore? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6l)] ed. 2020*

(13) What is your understanding of the relationship of the diaconal minister to the Annual Conference and The Methodist Church in Singapore? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6m)] ed. 2020*

(14) Describe your understanding of and appreciation for persons of different racial or ethnic heritages. *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6n)]*

(15) Are you willing to relate to and serve all persons without regard to race, colour, national origin or social status? *[2002 Ed. ¶606.6o)]*

2. The Board of Ministry may require additional psychological assessments to assist in the completion of the candidacy process. *Adopted 2004*

¶519. *Ordination.* The diaconal minister's relationship to the Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall be conferred by the act of ordination. Ordination to the office of diaconal minister shall be at the Annual Conference. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶607] ed. 2020*

¶520. *General Provisions.* 1. Diaconal ministers shall be *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶608]*

amenable to the Board of Ministry and accountable to the relevant agency in respect of their work responsibilities.

2. The Board of Ministry may appoint a sub-committee to assist in the discharge of its responsibilities in respect of diaconal ministers and diaconal ministry candidates. *Adopted 2004*

3. The diaconal minister who holds an assignment shall have a seat in the Annual Conference but without voting rights. *Adopted 2004 Am. 2020*

¶521. *Service of Diaconal Ministers.* 1. Diaconal ministers may serve: *[2002 Ed. ¶609.1)]*

a) within the General Conference;

b) within an Annual Conference; *ed. 2016*

c) within agencies of the General Conference and/or Annual Conferences; or *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶609.1c)]*

d) with the Trinity Theological College, Singapore (if so appointed by the bishop with the concurrence of the president of the diaconal minister's Annual Conference). *ed. 2016 Am. 2016 [ref GC 2012 Journal ¶2012/174]*

2. Diaconal ministers are non-itinerant. An agency, president or bishop may initiate or recommend an assignment, but they have no responsibility to do so. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶609.2]*

3. The service assignment of the diaconal minister shall be made by the Annual Conference president and, if the service assignment is outside of the relevant Annual Conference, pursuant to ¶579.5. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶609.3]*

¶522. *Credentials and Records.* Diaconal ministers' credentials and records shall be maintained by the conference Board of Ministry. *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶610]*

¶523. 1. The agency, Annual Conference or General Conference in which the diaconal minister is assigned (employed) shall provide for the remuneration and benefits of the diaconal minister within an approved salary and employment benefit scheme. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶616]*

2. Diaconal ministers without assignment shall not have the right to exercise ministerial functions but may retain their ministerial title. After three consecutive years without assignment *Adopted 2004*

their status shall be determined pursuant to either ¶¶526 or 527 at the next session of the Annual Conference.

¶524. *Transfers.* Diaconal ministers may be transferred from one Annual Conference to another Annual Conference within The Methodist Church in Singapore upon the recommendation of the relevant Boards of Ministry and with the approval of the president of the receiving Annual Conference and the ministerial sessions of both Annual Conferences involved. The credentials and records of a transferred diaconal minister shall be lodged with the registrar of the receiving Board of Ministry. The place of service assignment shall have been approved by the receiving president. *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶611]*

¶525. *Disability Leave.* When diaconal ministers are forced to give up their ministry because of their physical or emotional disability, upon recommendation of the Board of Ministry and by a majority vote of the ministerial session of the Annual Conference, they may be granted annual disability leave without losing their relationship to the Annual Conference. When diaconal ministers on disability leave recover sufficiently to resume their ministry, they may return to an active relationship to the Annual Conference through the process described for service assignment. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶612]*

¶526. *Retired Relationship.* Retired diaconal ministers are those who at their own request or by action of the ministerial session of the Annual Conference, on recommendation of the conference Board of Ministry, have been placed in the retired relationship. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶613]*

1. A diaconal minister may take retired relationship in the Annual Conference upon reaching age 60 in the year of retirement or after 25 years of service and thereafter shall not have the right to exercise ministerial functions or retain their ministerial title unless re-employed pursuant to ¶¶526A or 526B. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶613.1] Am. 2016*

2. By a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, the ministerial members of the Annual Conference may place diaconal ministers in the retired relation with or without their consent and irrespective of their age if such relation is recommended by the Board of Ministry. The conference Board of Ministry shall provide *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶613.2]*

guidance and counselling to the retiring member who thereafter shall not have the right to exercise ministerial functions or retain their ministerial title. *Am. 2016*

3. Every diaconal minister whose sixty-fifth birthday occurs in a calendar year shall automatically be retired from the active relationship on 31 December of that calendar year and thereafter shall not have the right to exercise ministerial functions or retain their ministerial title unless re-employed pursuant to ¶¶526A or 526B. *[2002 Ed. ¶613.3] Am. 2016*

4. Retired diaconal ministers shall be listed annually in the journal of the Annual Conference in which their retired relationship is held. *[2002 Ed. ¶613.4]*

¶526A. 1. Before a diaconal minister who is subject to compulsory retirement pursuant to ¶526.3 attains the age of 65, the General Conference or the Annual Conference or the agency of the General Conference or the Annual Conference where the diaconal minister serves ("Employing Agency") shall offer re-employment to that diaconal minister if the diaconal minister is assessed to have at least satisfactory work performance and to be medically fit to continue working ("eligible diaconal minister") and subject to compliance with the following principles: *Am. 2014* *Am. 2016*

a) re-employment shall be at the initiative and discretion of the Employing Agency; *Am 2016*

b) re-employment shall not take effect without the concurrence of the Board of Ministry and the approval of the ministerial session of the Annual Conference; *Am 2016*

c) re-employment shall be subject to the eligible diaconal minister accepting the terms of re-employment including the intended assignment to be received from the Employing Agency, the duties and responsibilities to be discharged during the period of re-employment and the benefits as may be offered (which need not be equivalent to those applicable to other diaconal ministers) and such terms must be specified and authorised by the Employing Agency and such other bodies whose authorisation may be required; and *Am 2016*

d) the period of re-employment should (subject to disciplinary *Am 2016*

proceedings) be for a period of one year renewable on an annual basis at least up to the statutory re-employment age under Singapore law and may be renewed in compliance with these principles. *Am. 2024*

2. Unless the eligible diaconal minister has informed the Employing Agency that the diaconal minister does not wish to be re-employed past the effective date of compulsory retirement, when the Employing Agency is unable to re-employ an eligible diaconal minister after reasonable attempts to find a suitable position for the eligible diaconal minister in the Employing Agency, it shall offer the eligible diaconal minister an employment assistance payment in the form of a single lump sum payment as may be determined by the Employing Agency after taking into account any available tripartite guidelines. *Am 2016*

3. Where the Employing Agency does not intend to re-employ an eligible diaconal minister because the diaconal minister does not satisfy the eligibility criteria, the Employing Agency shall, insofar as is reasonably practicable, give notice of its position in writing to the eligible diaconal minister, within a reasonable period before the eligible diaconal minister reaches the effective date of compulsory retirement. *Am 2016*

4. If the Employing Agency has not re-employed an eligible diaconal minister into active service, the eligible diaconal minister may be employed and/or otherwise engaged other than as a diaconal minister by the General Conference, the Annual Conference, a local church or their agencies. *Am. 2016* *Am. 2024*

¶526B. 1. The Employing Agency may (but shall not be obliged to) re-employ into active relationship a diaconal minister retired pursuant to ¶526.1 or who has ceased to be re-engaged pursuant to ¶526A if the retired diaconal minister is assessed to have at least satisfactory work performance prior to retirement and to be medically fit to continue working but subject to compliance with the following principles: *Am. 2014* *Am. 2016*

a) re-employment shall be at the initiative and discretion of the Employing Agency; *Am. 2016*

b) re-employment shall not take effect without the concurrence of the Board of Ministry and the approval of the ministerial session of the Annual Conference; *Am. 2016*

c) re-employment shall be subject to the diaconal minister accepting the terms of re-employment including the intended assignment to be received from the Employing Agency, the duties and responsibilities to be discharged during the period of re-employment and the benefits as may be offered (which need not be equivalent to those applicable to other diaconal ministers) and such terms must be specified and authorised by the Employing Agency and such other bodies whose authorisation may be required; and *Am. 2016*

d) the period of re-employment should (subject to disciplinary proceedings) be for a period of one year renewable on an annual basis at least up to the statutory re-employment age under Singapore law and may be renewed in compliance with these principles. *Am. 2016* *Am. 2024*

2. If the Employing Agency has not re-employed a retired diaconal minister into active relationship, the retired diaconal minister may be employed and/or otherwise engaged other than as a diaconal minister by the General Conference, the Annual Conference, a local church or their agencies. *Am. 2016* *Am. 2024*

¶527. *Termination of Employment*. 1. *Voluntary Termination.* A diaconal minister who desires to withdraw from service as a diaconal minister and employment may, after consultation with the Board of Ministry, deposit his/her credentials with the Registrar of the Board of Ministry between sessions of the Annual Conference. When this action is taken between sessions of the Annual Conference, it shall be reported by the Annual Conference at its next regular session. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶614.1]*

2. *Involuntary Termination.* *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶614.2]*

a) A diaconal minister's service as a diaconal minister may be terminated by a two-thirds majority vote of the ministerial members of the Annual Conference on recommendation of two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Ministry after three consecutive years without assignment or on the basis of incompetence in professional

function, indifference to the work of the ministry, or personal conduct which is deemed seriously to impair usefulness as a diaconal minister and thereafter such person shall no longer have the right to exercise ministerial functions or retain their ministerial title. *Am. 2016*

b) Without prejudice to ¶527.2a), the employment relationship of a diaconal minister may be terminated without cause by such notice as shall be provided in the diaconal minister's employment terms. *Adopted 2004*

3. *Reinstatement.* A diaconal minister's service as a diaconal minister may be reinstated by a two-thirds vote of the ministerial members of the Annual Conference on recommendation of the Board of Ministry. *Am. 2004 2002 Ed. ¶614.3*

¶528. 1. A diaconal minister shall be a member of a local church and be a voting member of its Local Conference. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶615.1]*

2. The diaconal minister shall make a report to the Local Conference of which he is a member. *[2002 Ed. ¶615.2]*

¶528A. *Transitional Arrangements for Diaconal Ministers Commissioned before 22 October 2004.* *Adopted 2004*

1. Where an Annual Conference has commissioned a person as a diaconal minister before 22 October 2004 under the provisions of the former Chapter Six of *The Book of Discipline* as then applicable, such persons shall continue nevertheless to be recognised as commissioned diaconal ministers with all rights and privileges as accorded under the aforesaid former Chapter Six until the Annual Conference otherwise determines in ministerial session but subject to the Board of Diaconal Ministry constituted under the former Chapter Six being abolished with effect from 22 October 2004 and all responsibilities of the said Board of Diaconal Ministry henceforth being discharged by the Board of Ministry of the Annual Conference.

2. An Annual Conference in ministerial session shall have full authority and discretion to determine the status of a diaconal minister who was commissioned before 22 October 2004. *Adopted 2004*

3. Without prejudice to the authority and discretion of the *Adopted 2004*

Annual Conference in ministerial session to otherwise determine, the Annual Conference in ministerial session may (after consultation with the person concerned and upon the recommendation of the Board of Ministry) consider a diaconal minister commissioned before 22 October 2004 for candidacy and ordination as a diaconal minister under the provisions of ¶¶512–518 of *The Book of Discipline* as in force from 22 October 2004 and subject always to such other conditions as the Annual Conference in ministerial session may determine.

4. By a three-fourths majority vote of the ministerial session of the Annual Conference upon recommendation by a three-fourths majority vote by the Board of Ministry, the service of a commissioned diaconal minister (before or after 22 October 2004) may be taken into consideration in full or partial satisfaction of the two years' minimum candidacy requirement under ¶518.1b) of *The Book of Discipline* as in force from 22 October 2004. *Adopted 2004*

Section IV. The Itinerant Ministry

¶529. Ordained itinerant ministers are called to specialised ministries of Word, Sacrament and Order. Through these distinctive functions such ministers devote themselves wholly to the work of the Church and to the upbuilding of the general ministry. They do this through careful study of the Scripture and its faithful interpretation, through effective proclamation of the gospel and responsible administration of the Sacraments, through diligent pastoral leadership of their congregations for fruitful discipleship, and by following the guidance of the Holy Spirit in witnessing beyond the congregation in the local community and to the ends of the earth. The ordained itinerant ministry is defined by its intentionally representative character, by its passion for the hallowing of life, and by its concern to link all local ministers with the widest boundaries of the Christian community. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶601.3]*

¶530. There are persons, with the ministry of the baptised, who are called of God and set apart by the Church for the specialised ministry of Word and Sacraments. *[2002 Ed. ¶502]*

¶531. It is the conviction of The Methodist Church in Singapore that God calls persons to this ministry and bestows upon them the gifts, graces and fruits necessary to fulfil this calling. *[2002 Ed. ¶503] ed. 2020*

¶532. The ordained itinerant ministry of The Methodist Church in Singapore cherishes its origins in the Christian tradition and in the Wesleyan tradition from which it has come. It seeks obedience to the Holy Spirit through cooperative efforts to perfect a ministry for the whole Church. It faces the future eager to share understandings and forms of the ministry which may be revealed. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶504] ed. 2020*

The ordained itinerant ministers are ministers of Word, Sacrament and Order, and thereby participate in the ministry of Christ in sharing a royal priesthood which has apostolic roots in such scriptural passages as 1 Peter 2:9; 1 Peter 5:2–3; John 21:15–17; Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1–7; and Titus 1:7–9.

¶533. In order that we may try those persons who profess to be moved by the Holy Spirit to become ministers, let the following questions be asked: *[2002 Ed. ¶505]*

1. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation? *[2002 Ed. ¶505.1]*

2. Have they gifts, as well as graces for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, dearly? *[2002 Ed. ¶505.2]*

3. Have they fruit? Have any been truly convinced of sin and converted to God, and are believers edified by their preaching? *[2002 Ed. ¶505.3]*

As long as these marks concur in anyone, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that he is moved by the Holy Spirit. *[2002 Ed. ¶505.4]*

¶534. The Methodist Church in Singapore seeks assurance in these matters, for only persons of genuine Christian experience and character, whose conduct before men is above reproach, and who are free from harmful practices that would mar their influence or compromise their witness, can receive the approval of The Methodist Church in Singapore as ministers of Word and Sacraments. *[2002 Ed. ¶506] ed. 2020*

ed. 2020

¶535. 1. Since the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching, self-avowed practising homosexuals are not to be accepted as candidates, ordained as itinerant ministers or approved to serve in The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Adopted 2004* *ed. 2020*

2. Every itinerant minister of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall accept that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teachings. *Adopted 2004* *ed. 2020*

¶536. 1. The itinerant ministry is the system of The Methodist Church in Singapore by which ministers are appointed by the presidents to fields of labour. All itinerant ministers shall accept and abide by these appointments. *Am. 2004* *[2002 Ed. ¶507.4]* *ed. 2020*

2. A ministerial student in The Methodist Church in Singapore is a person who has formally declared his purpose to enter the Christian ministry and has been officially recognised as such by the Annual Conference and is in the process of pursuing theological education, but is not yet a member on trial of the Annual Conference. A person so committed and classified shall immediately seek, with the assistance of his minister, the guidance of the Board of Ministry with reference to subsequent procedures and his continuing education programme. *[2002 Ed. ¶507.5]* *ed. 2020*

3. A member on trial is a local preacher who desires to become a member of an Annual Conference and has been accepted as a trial member. He shall have similar qualifications to those required of a deacon. A member on trial of an Annual Conference may request discontinuation of this relationship or may be discontinued by the Annual Conference on recommendation of the Board of Ministry without reflection upon his character. *[2002 Ed. ¶507.6]*

¶537. The ordained itinerant ministry of The Methodist Church in Singapore consists of the deacon and the elder. *Am. 2004* *[2002 Ed. ¶508]*

1. A deacon is a local preacher who has progressed sufficiently in preparation for the ministry to be received by an Annual Conference as member on trial and has been ordained deacon in accordance with the Order and Discipline of The Methodist Church in Singapore by the laying on of the hands of a bishop. *[2002 Ed. ¶508.1]* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

2. An elder is a deacon who has completed his formal preparation for the ministry of Word and Sacraments and has been ordained elder in accordance with the Order and Discipline of The Methodist Church in Singapore by the laying on of hands of a bishop and of elders. *[2002 Ed. ¶508.2]* *ed. 2020*

3. When there is need, qualified laymen may be authorised to exercise certain pastoral functions and shall be known as local preachers. Upon recommendation of the Board of Ministry, they may be approved by the Annual Conference for appointment as pastors of charges. *[2002 Ed. ¶508.3]*

¶538. The first step to the itinerant ministry of The Methodist Church in Singapore is admission into an Annual Conference as a member on trial. Members on trial are on probation as to character, preaching and competency as pastors. During this period the Church determines whether the member on trial is worthy of becoming a full member of the Annual Conference. A member on trial may be discontinued without any reflection on character. *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶518] ed. 2020*

¶539. A candidate for the itinerant ministry may be admitted on trial by vote of the ministerial members of an Annual Conference on recommendation by the Board of Ministry after meeting the following conditions. The candidate shall: *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶519]*

1. Have a licence to preach. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶519.1]*

2. Have been recommended by at least three-fourths of the members of the Board of Ministry present and voting. A quorum shall consist of a three-fourths of the total Board membership. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶519.2]*

3. Have met the educational requirements set by the Annual Conference. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶519.3]*

4. Present a certificate of good health from a physician approved by the Board of Ministry. The Annual Conference may require psychological tests to provide additional information on the candidate's fitness for the ministry. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶519.4]*

5. File with the Board of Ministry satisfactory answers to such questions as the Board may ask concerning age, family, religious *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶519.5]*

and church experience, call to the ministry, educational record and plans for service in the Church. The following questions shall be included:

a) Are you convinced that you should enter the ordained itinerant ministry of the Church? *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶519.5a)]*

b) Are you willing to face any sacrifices that may be involved? *[2002 Ed. ¶519.5b)]*

c) Are you in debt so as to interfere with your ministry, or have you any obligations to others which will make it difficult to live on the salary you are to receive? *[2002 Ed. ¶519.5c)]*

d) If you are married, is your wife or husband in sympathy with your ministerial calling and willing to share in the sacrifices of your vocation? *[2002 Ed. ¶519.5d)]*

e) Are you willing to make a complete dedication of yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian ministry with respect to the purity of life in body, in mind and in spirit, and to bear witness thereto by abstinence from all indulgences including alcoholic beverages and tobacco which may injure your influence? *[2002 Ed. ¶519.5e)]*

f) Will you keep before you as the one great objective of your life the advancement of God's Kingdom? *[2002 Ed. ¶519.5f)]*

¶540. An Annual Conference shall set the requirements in theological training necessary for the itinerant ministry and shall indicate what requirements a local preacher shall complete before he can be considered for admission as a member on trial. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶520]*

¶541. While a member is on trial, the Annual Conference alone has jurisdiction over his authority to preach. His continuance on trial shall be equivalent to the renewal of his licence to preach. If he discontinues, he becomes a local preacher. *[2002 Ed. ¶521]*

¶542. A member on trial who is regularly appointed to a pastoral charge without an ordained colleague is subject to the provisions of ¶511.1 and ¶511.3. *[2002 Ed.¶522]*

¶543. If the member on trial is pursuing ministerial studies, he shall make regular progress in such studies in order to be continued as a member on trial. In case of failure or delay, the Board of Ministry may extend the time up to a maximum of eight years for *[2002 Ed. ¶523] Am. 2024*

the completion of the course of study.

¶544. A member on trial may be admitted into full connection in an Annual Conference in accordance with the requirements hereinafter provided. *[2002 Ed. ¶524]*

Section V. Deacons

¶545. 1. *Duties.* A deacon has authority to preach, to conduct divine worship, to perform the marriage ceremony if the laws of the state permit, to administer baptism, to assist an elder in administering the Lord's Supper and to receive persons into membership in the church and to bury the dead; provided that while serving as an appointed pastor of a church he shall be authorised to administer the Lord's Supper under conditions set forth in *The Book of Discipline*. *[2002 Ed. ¶525.1]*

2. *Qualifications.* A preacher may be elected to the office of deacon and certified as such, after having qualified in the following ways. The preacher shall have: *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶525.2]*

a) A valid licence to preach. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶525.2a)]*

b) Graduated from a theological seminary approved by The Methodist Church in Singapore or completed two full years of the ministerial course of study under the supervision of the Board of Ministry and served for two consecutive years as a pastor or an approved supply pastor. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶525.2b)] ed. 2020*

c) Been examined by the Annual Conference in the manner set forth under ¶539.5. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶525.2c)]*

d) Been recommended in writing to the Annual Conference on the basis of a three-fourths majority vote of the Board of Ministry. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶525.2d)]*

e) Satisfied the Board of Ministry as to physical, mental and emotional health and if necessary undergo such tests as may be required. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶525.2e)]*

f) Filed with the Board satisfactory written answers to such questions as the Board may ask concerning age, family, religious *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶525.2f)]*

and church experience, call to the ministry, educational record and plans for service in the Church.

¶546. *Miscellaneous Provisions.* 1. An Annual Conference may designate a bachelor of theology or equivalent degree from a school of theology accredited or approved by The Methodist Church in Singapore as the minimum educational requirement for the office of deacon; provided that any candidate whose transcript does not show satisfactory completion of studies in Methodist history, polity and doctrine, shall be required to pass an examination on these subjects, administered by the Board of Ministry. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶526.1] ed. 2020*

2. The Board of Ministry shall require transcripts from the candidate before recognising any educational claims. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶526.2]*

3. A preacher who discontinues theological education may request that the Board of Ministry evaluate the preacher's theological work for credit in the ministerial course of study. The preacher shall be exempted from any portion of the four-year course for which equivalent work has been completed in a school of theology accredited or approved by The Methodist Church in Singapore, provided that the Board shall have examined an official transcript thereof and certified its equivalent. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶526.3]* *ed. 2020*

4. While a deacon, the Annual Conference alone has jurisdiction over the deacon's authority to preach. Continuance of the licence to preach shall be equivalent to the renewal of the licence to preach. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶526.4]*

5. A deacon in a special appointment shall be supervised by the district superintendent in the area who shall report annually to the Board of Ministry. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶526.5]*

6. If the deacon is pursuing ministerial studies, he shall make regular progress in such studies in order to be continued as a member on trial. In case of failure or delay, the Board of Ministry shall investigate the circumstances and judge whether to extend the time, within the following limits for completing the entire course of study. In a case clearly recognised as exceptional the Board by a three-fourths vote may recommend an extension beyond these *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶526.6] Am. 2024*

limits, which may be approved by a three-fourths vote of the Annual Conference; provided, however, that no candidate shall be continued on trial beyond the eighth regular conference session following admission to the office of deacon.

7. The educational standards and other requirements for admission shall be set by the Annual Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶526.7]*

Section VI. Elders

¶547. 1. An itinerant minister in full connection with an Annual Conference by virtue of election and ordination is bound in special covenant with all the ordained ministers of that Annual Conference. In the keeping of this covenant the minister performs the ministerial duties and maintains the ministerial standards established by those in the covenant. Having offered without reserve to be appointed, the minister shall serve as the minister's superiors in office may determine, living with fellow ministers in mutual trust and concern and seeking with them the sanctification of the fellowship. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶527.1] Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 1 of 2018*

2. The itinerant system is the accepted method of The Methodist Church in Singapore by which fields of labour are assigned to ministers. They shall be made by the president. All ministers and all fields of labour shall subscribe to and abide by the assignments. *[2002 Ed.¶527.2] ed. 2020*

3. Ministers in full connection shall have the right to vote on all matters in the Annual Conference and shall have the sole responsibility for all matters of ordination, character and conference relations of ordained ministers. *[2002 Ed.¶527.3]*

4. Every ministerial member who is in full connection and in good standing in an Annual Conference shall receive an annual appointment by the president. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶527.4]*

5. Itinerant ministers seeking an appointment and/or assignment outside their own Annual Conference shall send such requests to the president of their Annual Conference. If the president supports such a request, the president shall process the same through the bishop and, if the requested assignment is within *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶527.5]*

The Methodist Church in Singapore, the Council of Presidents which shall act as clearing house to facilitate interconference transfers within The Methodist Church in Singapore that meet the needs of specialised ministries.

6. Should the credentials of any elder be destroyed or lost, the bishop who ordained the elder, or the bishop in whose territory the elder resides, upon ascertaining the facts, may issue duplicate credentials. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶527.6]*

7. Preachers of the following categories are eligible for election to the office of elder: *[2002 Ed. ¶527.7]*

a) Theological graduates who have been deacons (excluding diaconal ministers) for at least two years and are admitted into full connection after having met the requirements of *The Book of Discipline*. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶527.7a)]*

b) Deacons who have completed the course of study and have been deacons (excluding diaconal ministers) for at least two years and are admitted into full connection after having met the requirements of *The Book of Discipline.* *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶527.7b)]*

c) Missionaries who have served under appointment as deacons (excluding diaconal ministers) for two years, are admitted into full connection, and are to be appointed pursuant to ¶580.2 by the bishop to a foreign mission, or to a pastorate of a church in a foreign country outside the missionary's Annual Conference. *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶527.7c)]*

d) Chaplains who have served under appointment as deacons (excluding diaconal ministers) for two years and are admitted into full connection. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶527.7d)]*

8. When an eligible deacon has fulfilled the requirements of ordination as elder and has been elected to the office of elder, but fails to receive ordination through the absence of the bishop, the elder's eligibility to the office of elder shall count from the time of election to the office of elder. *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶527.8]*

9. No person shall be elected to the office of elder except such as are of unquestionable moral character and genuine piety, sound in the fundamental doctrine of Christianity and faithful in the discharge of their duties. *[2002 Ed. ¶527.9]*

¶548. *Election into Full Connection.* 1. An eligible deacon may be elected an itinerant member in full connection with an Annual Conference and ordained an elder and certified as such after having qualified in the following ways. The deacon shall have: *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶528.1]*

a) been a deacon under one of the categories under ¶547.7; *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶528.1a)]*

b) met the educational requirements set by the Board of Ministry of the Annual Conference; *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶528.1b)]*

c) passed satisfactorily a doctrinal examination administered by the Board of Ministry which includes the following questions: *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶528.1c)]*

(1) What are your reasons for believing in one God, Father Almighty, Maker and Sustainer of all things visible and invisible?

(2) What reasons have you for belief that the Holy Bible reveals the Word of God so far as it is necessary for our salvation?

(3) What evidence do you give that man is in need of divine salvation? How do your own experiences verify such need?

(4) What do you believe concerning the person of Jesus Christ and the divine atonement through him?

(5) What is your conception of the office and work of the Holy Spirit?

(6) What is your conception of repentance, faith, justification, regeneration and sanctification?

(7) What is the nature and the function of the Church?

(8) What is the significance of the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper?

(9) What is your conception of man's immortality and future state?

(10) What do you understand by "evangelism"?

(11) What do you believe to be the place of Christian Social action in the programme of the Kingdom of God?

(12) What is your dominant motive as a Christian minister?

d) passed satisfactorily an examination of the deacon's intention provided and administered by the Board of Ministry. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶528.1d)]*

2. The bishop as chief pastor shall engage those seeking to be *ed. 2006*

[2002 Ed. ¶528.2]

admitted into full connection in serious self-searching and prayer to prepare them for their examination before the Annual Conference. At the time of the examination the bishop shall also explain to the conference the historic nature of these questions and seek to interpret their spirit and intent. The questions are these and any others which may be thought necessary (the questions that follow are those which every Methodist preacher from the beginning has been required to answer upon becoming a full member of an Annual Conference; these questions were formulated by John Wesley and have been little changed throughout the years):

a) Have you faith in Christ?

b) Are you going on to perfection?

c) Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life?

d) Are you earnestly striving after it?

e) Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and his work?

f) Do you know the General Rules of our Church?

g) Will you keep them?

h) Have you studied the doctrine of The Methodist Church?

i) After full examination do you believe that our doctrines are in harmony with the Holy Scriptures?

j) Will you preach and maintain them?

k) Have you studied our form of church discipline and polity?

l) Do you approve our church government and polity?

m) Will you support and maintain them?

n) Will you diligently instruct the children in every place?

o) Will you visit from house to house?

p) Will you recommend fasting or abstinence, both by precept and example?

q) Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God?

r) Are you in debt so as to embarrass you in your work?

s) Will you observe the following directions?

"Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never trifle away time; neither spend any more time at

any one place than is strictly necessary.

Be punctual. Do everything exactly at the time. And do not mend our rules, but keep them; not for wrath, but for conscience's sake."

3. A candidate for admission into full connection shall:

a) Present a certificate of good health from a physician approved by the Board of Ministry. The Annual Conference may require psychological tests to provide additional information on the candidate's fitness for the ministry. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶528.3]*

b) Have been recommended for the office of elder by the Board of Ministry of the Annual Conference. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶528.4]*

c) Have received a majority vote of the ministerial members of the Annual Conference admitting the candidate into full connection and the office of an elder. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶528.5]*

d) Have received ordination by the laying of hands of a bishop and of such elders as the bishop determines. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶528.6]*

e) Possess certification of ordination. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶528.7]*

¶549. *Continuing Education.* The itinerant minister shall be encouraged to continue his education throughout his career, including a carefully developed personal programme of study augmented by involvement in organised educational activities. In most cases the itinerant minister's continuing educational programme shall allow for leave of absence for study. Such leave shall not be considered as part of the itinerant minister's vacation and shall be planned in consultation with his charge or other agency to which he is appointed as well as with his bishop or president, district superintendent and chairman of the Board of Ministry. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶532]*

¶550. 1. *Sabbatical Leave.* Any itinerant minister in full connection who has been in the effective relation in an Annual Conference or Annual Conferences for ten consecutive years from the time of his admission on trial may be granted sabbatical leave by his president for one year without losing his relationship as an effective minister. This sabbatical leave is to be allowed for travel, study, rest or for other justifiable reasons. Sabbatical leave granted *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶533] Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 1 of 2015*

by the president of the Annual Conference must be upon the vote of the Annual Conference to which that minister belongs, after that minister has given notice to his district superintendent, and after the district superintendent has given notice to the president of his intention to request such sabbatical leave. Sabbatical leave shall not be granted to the same person more frequently than one year in seven (¶272.6j).

2. An itinerant minister in full connection shall, during full-time appointment to the faculty of Trinity Theological College, be allowed to take sabbatical leave according to the College's sabbatical leave scheme notwithstanding anything in ¶550.1. *Am. 2024*

3. Once a minister who has taken sabbatical leave under ¶550.2 ceases to be appointed to Trinity Theological College, his eligibility for sabbatical leave under ¶550.1 shall commence from the end of the last sabbatical leave taken under ¶550.2. *Am. 2024*

¶551. *Disability Leave*. 1. When an itinerant minister in full connection in an Annual Conference is forced to give up his ministerial work because of his physical or mental disability, upon the recommendation of the Board of Ministry and the Board of Finance and by a majority vote of the ministerial members of the Annual Conference in full connection who are present and voting, he may be granted annual disability leave without losing his relationship to the Annual Conference; provided, however, that such leave may be granted or renewed only after a thorough investigation of the case and examination of medical evidence in accordance with ¶551.3, up to and not beyond his attainment of the age of 60. Each disability leave granted by the Annual Conference shall be recorded in the Conference journal. *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶534.1]*

2. When an itinerant minister in full connection is forced to give up his ministerial work between sessions of the Annual Conference on account of his physical or mental disability, with the approval of a majority vote of the district superintendents, after consultation with the Board of Ministry and the Board of Finance, disability leave may be granted by the president for the remainder of the conference year; provided, however, that such leave may be *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶534.2]* *Am. 2024*

granted only after examination of medical evidence in accordance with ¶551.3. Any such leave granted between sessions of the Annual Conference, with the effective date of such leave, shall be entered in the journal of the next regular session of the Annual Conference.

3. An itinerant minister in full connection may be granted disability leave only after a medical report has been submitted to the Board of Ministry by a medical doctor who has been approved by the said Board of the Annual Conference. *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶534.3]*

4. When an itinerant minister in full connection on disability leave recovers sufficiently to resume ministerial work, with his consent he may receive an appointment from the president between sessions of the Annual Conference, thereby terminating the disability leave. Such appointment shall be reported immediately by the Board of Appointments to the Board of Finance. Such termination of leave, together with the effective date, shall be recorded in the journal of the Annual Conference at its next regular session. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶534.4]*

Section VII. District Superintendent

¶552. District superintendents are to be chosen and appointed by the president after consultation with the Annual Conference Executive Board. The duties of a district superintendent are: *[2002 Ed. ¶531]*

1. To travel through his district in order to preach and to oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.1]*

2. In the absence of a president, to have charge of all the itinerant ministers and local preachers in his district. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶531.2] Am. 2016*

3. To change, receive or appoint itinerant ministers and local preachers during the intervals between conferences and in the absence of the president, as *The Book of Discipline* shall direct; provided that he shall not appoint any itinerant minister or local preacher who has been rejected as an applicant, or who has been discontinued or located, except at his own request, unless the *[2002 Ed. ¶531.3] Am. 2016*

conference at the time of such rejection, discontinuance or location shall grant such authority; and he shall not appoint any itinerant minister or local preacher who has previously been expelled from the ministry, or has surrendered his credentials to an Annual Conference, unless the conference to which he surrendered his credentials, or from which he was expelled, restores his credentials, or recommends him; and he shall not appoint any local preacher who is not listed as an approved supply pastor, except between sessions of the Annual Conference, and then only until its next session.

4. To issue and renew licences for local preachers in accordance with the action of the Board of Ministry; and to furnish certified lists of the persons licensed and their respective local churches to the Board of Ministry and to the secretary of the Annual Conference for publication in the conference journal. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.4]* *Am. 2016*

5. To preside, or to designate any elder to preside, at Local Conferences, and to preside at district conferences provided that in the Local Conference where the district superintendent is also the pastor-in-charge, the president shall designate another elder to preside over the Local Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.5]* *Am. 2016 ed. 2017*

6. To take care that every part of *The Book of Discipline* is observed in his district. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.6]*

7. To oversee compliance with charity governance obligations by each of the local churches in his district. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.7]* *Am. 2016*

8. To counsel with the pastors in his district in regard to their pastoral responsibilities and other matters affecting their ministry including relationship with the lay leadership of the local church. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.8]* *Am. 2016*

9. To advise and encourage local preachers and candidates for the ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.9]*

10. To report the names and addresses of all candidates for the ministry to the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.10]* *Am. 2016*

11. To procure statistics from every church and report them to the Annual Conference, in case the pastor should fail to make report, and to have the records of his district conference at the Annual Conference for examination. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.13]* *ed. 2016*

12. To decide all questions of law which may arise in the business of the local or district conference, when submitted to him in writing, subject to appeal to the president at the next Annual Conference session. *[2002 Ed.¶531.14] ed. 2016*

13. To promote all the interests of the church within the bounds of his district, in cooperation with the pastors and the Local Conference, giving particular attention to the following: *[2002 Ed.¶531.15] ed. 2016*

a) The cultivation of personal religion and the sharing of spiritual experience. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.15a)]*

b) Evangelistic interest and activity among the churches and the unevangelised. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.15b)]*

c) Establishment of preaching places and organisation of congregations wherever needed. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.15c)]*

d) Missionary and social services, interests and activities, including the Women's Society of Christian Service, hospitals, homes and orphanages. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.15d)]*

e) Discipleship and nurture, including church school, youth fellowships, adult or young adult fellowships, Boys' Brigade, Girls' Brigade, church-related schools and all other educational institutions and work. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.15e)] Am. 2016*

f) Christian literature and media, especially of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *[2002 Ed.¶531.15f)] Am. 2016 ed. 2020*

g) Lay activities, including personal evangelism, Christian stewardship, proper financial systems, temperance, social and economic justice, world peace, charitable donations, conference contributions and Christian life service. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.15g)] Am. 2016*

h) Administration of the Ordinances and Sacraments. *[2002 Ed ¶531.15h)]*

i) Formation of group ministries, larger parishes or parish area plans to expedite the work of the church in larger areas. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.15i)]*

14. To perform such other duties as *The Book of Discipline* and the Annual Conference may direct. *[2002 Ed. ¶531.16] ed. 2016*

15. No district superintendent shall, without the prior consent of his bishop or president, engage as an evangelist or a preacher any *[2002 Ed. ¶531.17] ed. 2016*

person who is not a conference evangelist, a regular member of an Annual Conference, an approved supply pastor, a local preacher in good standing in The Methodist Church in Singapore or a preacher who is a member of a member church of the National Council of Churches in Malaysia or Singapore and whose faith and views are known to be consonant with the faith and practice of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *Am. 2016 ed. 2020 ed. 2020*

Section VIII. Supernumerary Ministers

¶553. A supernumerary minister is a minister in full connection who because of impaired health, or other equally sufficient reason, is temporarily unable to perform full work. This relationship shall not be granted for more than five years in succession except by the two-thirds vote of the Annual Conference, upon recommendation of the Board of Ministry, and a statement of the reason for such recommendation. He may receive an appointment, or be left without one, according to the judgment of the Annual Conference; and he shall be subject to all limitations of *The Book of Discipline* in respect to reappointment and continuance in the same church that apply to effective ministers. In case he has no pastoral appointment he shall have a seat in the Local Conference, and all the privileges of membership, in the place where he resides. He shall report to the Local Conference, and to the pastor, all marriages performed and all baptisms administered. Should he reside outside the bounds of his Annual Conference, he shall forward to it annually a certificate similar to that required of a retired minister, and in case of failure to do so the Annual Conference may locate him without his consent. He shall have no claim on conference funds except by vote of the conference. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶535]*

Section IX. Retired Ministers in Full Connection

¶554. 1. A retired minister is a minister in full connection who at his own request, or by action of the Annual Conference (on recommendation of the Board of Ministry) or automatically *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶536] Am. 2014*

pursuant to ¶554.2, has been placed in the retired relation. *Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 1 of 2018*

2. Every ministerial member of an Annual Conference whose sixty-fifth birthday occurs in a calendar year shall automatically be retired from active ministry on 31 December of that calendar year and placed in the retired relation, except when such a member is elected or serving as the bishop or president. *Am. 2008 [2002 Ed. ¶537] Am. 2014 Am. 2024*

3. If any member of an Annual Conference who has attained age 60 or has completed 25 years of full-time approved service, so requests, prior to the date of the opening session of the conference, the Annual Conference may place him in the retired relation. *[2002 Ed. ¶538]*

4. Every retired minister who is not appointed as pastor of a church shall have a seat in the Local Conference, and all the privileges of membership in the church where he resides, except as set forth in *The Book of Discipline*. A retired minister shall designate the Local Conference to which he shall be attached subject to such designation having the prior approval of the president (who shall consult the district superintendents and the pastor-in-charge of that Local Conference). A retired minister shall report to the Local Conference and to the pastor(s) on the discharge of his Christian and ministerial conduct, including all marriages performed and baptisms administered. If he resides outside the bounds of the Annual Conference, he shall forward annually to his Annual Conference a certificate of his Christian and ministerial conduct, together with an account of the number and circumstances of his family, signed by the district superintendent or pastor of the charge within the bounds of which he resides. Without this certificate the Annual Conference may after due notice (30 days) locate him without his consent. *[2002 Ed. ¶539] Am. 2014 ed. 2017*

5. A minister serving as a member of a General Conference agency who retires shall cease to be a member thereof at the time of retirement. The vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the provisions of *The Book of Discipline*. *Am. 2020*

6. No retired minister (whether or not re-engaged into active service) shall be eligible to serve as bishop or president but a retired *Am. 2014*

minister shall be eligible for election to a General Conference agency or an agency of the Annual Conference.

¶554A. 1. Before a minister in full connection who is subject to compulsory retirement pursuant to ¶554.2 attains the age of 65, the Annual Conference shall offer re-engagement to that minister if the minister is assessed to have at least satisfactory work performance and to be medically fit to continue working ("eligible minister") and subject to compliance with the following principles: *[2002 Ed. ¶540] Am. 2014 Am. 2016 Refer to Judicial Council DD No. 1 of 2018*

a) re-engagement shall be at the initiative and discretion of the president, in consultation with the Board of Appointments;

b) re-engagement shall not take effect without the concurrence of the Board of Ministry and the approval of the ministerial session of the Annual Conference;

c) re-engagement shall be subject to the eligible minister accepting the terms of re-engagement including the intended appointment to be received from the president, the duties and responsibilities to be discharged during the period of re-engagement and the benefits as may be offered (which need not be equivalent to those applicable to other ministers) and such terms must be specified and authorised by the president (after consultation with the Board of Appointments), the Executive Board and such other bodies as the Executive Board may designate; and *Am. 2016*

d) the period of re-engagement should (subject to disciplinary proceedings) be for a period of one year renewable on an annual basis at least up to the statutory re-employment age under Singapore law and may be renewed in compliance with these principles. *Am. 2016* *Am. 2024*

2. Unless the eligible minister has informed the Annual Conference that the minister does not wish to be re-engaged past the effective date of compulsory retirement, when the Annual Conference is unable to re-engage an eligible minister after reasonable attempts to find a suitable position for the eligible minister in the Annual Conference, it shall offer the eligible minister an employment assistance payment in the form of a single lump sum payment as may be determined by the Annual Conference after taking into account any available tripartite guidelines. *Am. 2016*

3. Where the Annual Conference does not intend to re-engage an eligible minister because the minister does not satisfy the eligibility criteria, the Annual Conference shall, insofar as is reasonably practicable, give notice of its position in writing to the eligible minister, within a reasonable period before the eligible minister reaches the effective date of compulsory retirement. *Am. 2016 ed. 2020*

4. An eligible minister who has been re-engaged into active service (whether on a full-time basis or less) shall, for the duration of such re-engagement, not be a member of any Local Conference except that of the Local Conference to which the eligible minister may have been appointed by the president for the purposes of such re-engagement. *ed. 2016 Am. 2016 ed. 2020*

5. If the Annual Conference has not re-engaged an eligible minister into active service, the eligible minister shall (unless the ministerial session of the Annual Conference otherwise decides generally or specifically) be eligible to be employed and/or otherwise engaged by a local church of the Annual Conference or to serve in an agency of a Local Conference with the prior approval of the president of the Annual Conference and the district superintendents. All such employment and/or engagement by a local church of the Annual Conference or to serve in an agency of a Local Conference beyond the first year of such employment shall be subject to the prior approval of the president of the Annual Conference and the district superintendents on an annual basis. *ed. 2016 Am. 2016 Am. 2024*

¶554B. 1. The Annual Conference may (but shall not be obliged to) re-engage into active service a retired minister who has taken early retirement pursuant to ¶554.3 or has ceased to be re-engaged pursuant to ¶554A if the retired minister is assessed to have at least satisfactory work performance prior to retirement and to be medically fit to continue working but subject to compliance with the following principles: *Am. 2014 Am. 2016*

a) re-engagement shall be at the initiative and discretion of the president, in consultation with the Board of Appointments;

b) re-engagement shall not take effect without the concurrence of the Board of Ministry and the approval of the ministerial session

of the Annual Conference;

c) re-engagement shall be subject to the minister accepting the terms of re-engagement including the intended appointment to be received from the president, the duties and responsibilities to be discharged during the period of re-engagement and the benefits as may be offered (which need not be equivalent to those applicable to other ministers) and such terms must be specified and authorised by the president (after consultation with the Board of Appointments), the Executive Board and such other bodies as the Executive Board may designate; and

d) the period of re-engagement should (subject to disciplinary proceedings) be for a period of one year renewable on an annual basis at least up to 67 years and may be renewed in compliance with these principles. *Am. 2016*

2. A retired minister who has been re-engaged into active service (whether on a full-time basis or less) shall, for the duration of such re-engagement, not be a member of any Local Conference except that of the Local Conference to which the eligible minister may have been appointed by the president for the purposes of such re-engagement. *Am. 2016*

3. If the Annual Conference has not re-engaged a retired minister into active service, the retired minister shall (unless the ministerial session of the Annual Conference otherwise decides generally or specifically) be eligible to be employed and/or otherwise engaged by a local church of the Annual Conference or to serve in an agency of a Local Conference with the prior approval of the president of the Annual Conference and the district superintendents. All such employment and/or engagement by a local church of the Annual Conference or to serve in an agency of a Local Conference beyond the first year of such employment shall be subject to the prior approval of the president of the Annual Conference and the district superintendents on an annual basis. *Am. 2024* *Am. 2016*

Section X. Termination of Annual Conference Membership of Itinerant Ministers in Full Connection

ed. 2006

¶555. Termination of Annual Conference membership may be accomplished in the ways indicated below upon recommendation of the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶541]*

¶556. *Voluntary Location.* An Annual Conference may grant a member a certificate of location at his own request until the next Annual Conference session; *provided* that it shall first have examined his character at the Annual Conference session when the request is made and found him in good standing; and *provided* further, that this relation shall be granted only to one who avowedly intends to discontinue regular ministerial or evangelistic work. This relation shall be certified by the president of the Annual Conference. He shall report to the Local Conference and the pastor all marriages performed, baptisms administered and funerals conducted, and shall be held amenable for his conduct and the continuance of his ordination rights to the Annual Conference. If he fails to seek re-admission to the Annual Conference within a period of four years, this relation shall be terminated. He shall be informed accordingly. *[2002 Ed. ¶542]*

¶557. A minister who has been located at his own request may be readmitted by an Annual Conference, at its discretion, upon presentation of his certificate of location and the recommendation of the Board of Ministry of the Annual Conference from which he located. *[2002 Ed. ¶543]*

¶558. *Involuntary Location.* Whenever it is determined by the Board of Ministry that, in their judgment, a member of the Annual Conference is unacceptable, inefficient or indifferent in the work of the ministry, or that his conduct is such as to impair seriously his usefulness as a minister, they shall notify him in writing, and ask him to request location at the next session of the Annual Conference. If he refuses or neglects to locate as requested the Annual Conference may, by majority vote, on recommendation of at least three-fourths vote of the Board of Ministry, locate him without his consent. In the case of involuntary location the authority *Am. 2004* *[2002 Ed. ¶544]*

to exercise the ministerial office shall be suspended, and the district superintendent shall require from him his credentials to be deposited with the Registrar of the Board of Ministry.

¶559. 1. Whenever it is unanimously determined by the district superintendents that a member of the Annual Conference should be located for any of the reasons cited in ¶558 and that his suspension from ministerial office is warranted, they shall notify him in writing of their judgment, and ask him to request: a) location at the next session of the Annual Conference under the provisions of ¶556; or b) withdrawal under the provisions of ¶560 (if he remains in good standing) or ¶561.2 (if charges or complaints have been made against him). *[2002 Ed. ¶545.1]*

2. If the member of the Annual Conference concerned submits his application for location or withdrawal to the chairperson, or if he is himself the chairperson, to the registrar of the Board of Ministry, he shall (from the time that his submission is received) be suspended from ministerial office and the right to exercise ministerial functions (but not the right to draw any salary or benefits). His status will thereafter be determined pursuant to: a) ¶556 at the next session of the Annual Conference if he applied for location; or b) ¶560 or ¶561.2, as the case may be, if he applied to withdraw (and, if he is not permitted to locate under ¶556 or withdraw under ¶560 or ¶561.2, his status will then be determined under ¶558). *[2002 Ed. ¶545.2]*

3. If the member of the Annual Conference concerned refuses or neglects to submit his application for location or withdrawal when asked, the district superintendents shall certify the fact to the Board of Ministry. Upon receiving such certification, the Board of Ministry shall meet without delay to consider whether he should be subject to suspension pending involuntary location. If the Board of Ministry so recommends, by at least a three-fourths vote, he shall thereupon be suspended from ministerial office and the right to exercise ministerial functions (but not the right to draw any salary or benefits). His status will thereafter be determined at the next session of the Annual Conference pursuant to ¶558. *[2002 Ed. ¶545.3]*

4. Upon location under ¶558 or suspension under ¶¶559.2 or *Am. 2004*

559.3 taking effect, the district superintendents shall require from the member of the Annual Conference concerned his credentials to be deposited with the Registrar of the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶545.4]*

5. The suspension of the member of the Annual Conference concerned under ¶¶559.2 or 559.3 shall continue until his status is determined. The suspension shall cease if a vote to involuntarily locate him under ¶558 does not receive majority support at the Annual Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶545.5]*

¶560. 1. *Surrender of Ministerial Office*. Any member of an Annual Conference in good standing who desires to surrender his ministerial office and withdraw from the Annual Conference may be allowed to do so by the Annual Conference at its session, in which case his credentials shall be filed with the Registrar of the Board of Ministry of the Annual Conference of which he was a member, and his membership in the church shall be recorded in the church where he resides at the time of such surrender. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶546.1]*

2. A member of an Annual Conference in good standing who desires to surrender his ministerial office and withdraw from the Annual Conference whilst the Annual Conference is in session or within one month before the next session of the Annual Conference shall do so pursuant to ¶560.1. If such member desires to do so more than one month before a previously scheduled session of the Annual Conference, he may be allowed to do so by not less than a three-fourths majority vote of the Board of Ministry upon the board receiving certification that he has been counselled in respect of his proposed action by at least two of the following: *[2002 Ed. ¶546.2]*

a) The president of the Annual Conference.
b) A district superintendent.
c) The chairperson of the Board of Ministry.

His credentials shall thereupon be filed and his church membership shall be recorded in the manner provided in ¶560.1 and the surrender and withdrawal shall be reported to the next session of the Annual Conference.

¶561. 1. *Withdrawals.* When a minister in good standing withdraws to unite with another denomination, his credentials *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶547.1]*

should be surrendered to the Registrar of the Board of Ministry, and if he shall desire it, they may be returned to him with the following inscription written plainly across their face, namely:

A.B. has this day been honourably discharged by the ..... Annual Conference from the ministry of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

Dated .... President

..... Secretary

2. When a minister is facing disciplinary proceedings under ¶¶742–761A (whether or not charges have been filed or complaints are under investigation), he may be permitted to withdraw from membership in the Annual Conference. If he applies to withdraw: *ed. 2013 [2002 Ed. ¶547.2]*

a) when the Annual Conference is in session or within one month before the next session of the Annual Conference, his application shall be considered and if thought fit allowed upon a majority vote of the Annual Conference on recommendation by not less than a three-fourths majority vote of the Board of Ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶547.2a)]*

b) more than one month before a previously scheduled session of the Annual Conference, his application shall be considered and if thought fit allowed upon not less than a three-fourths majority vote of the Board of Ministry on the unanimous recommendation of the district superintendents and such withdrawal shall be reported to the next session of the Annual Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶547.2b)]*

3. A minister who withdraws under ¶561.2 shall be required to surrender his credentials to the Registrar of the Board of Ministry and shall (pursuant to ¶761A) have entered into his record "Withdrawn under Charges" or "Withdrawn under Complaint", as the case may be, and his status shall be the same as if he was involuntarily located under ¶558. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶547.3]*

Section XI. Ministers from Other Churches

¶562. Ministers coming from other evangelical churches, provided they present suitable testimonials of good standing through the Board of Ministry, and give assurance of their faith, Christian experience and other qualifications, and give evidence of *[2002 Ed. ¶550]*

their agreement with us in doctrine and discipline, and present a certificate of good health from a physician approved by the Board of Ministry, and meet the educational requirements, may be received into the Methodist ministry in the following manner:

1. The Board of Ministry may receive them as local preachers, diaconal ministers or deacons not entitled to administer the Sacraments, pending the recognition of their ordination by the Annual Conference. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶550.1]*

2. The Annual Conference may recognise their ordination as deacons provided their qualifications meet the educational and other requirements of *The Book of Discipline*, including knowledge of Methodist history, polity and doctrine. *[2002 Ed. ¶550.2]*

3. On recommendation of the Board of Ministry, the Annual Conference may recognise their ordination and admit them into the membership of the Annual Conference in full connection, provided their qualifications meet the educational and other requirements of *The Book of Discipline*, including knowledge of Methodist history, polity and doctrine. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶550.3]*

4. Ministers from other churches who can meet the educational standards required of Methodist ministers may apply through the Board of Ministry to the Annual Conference, which may recognise their credentials and receive them on trial or into full membership of the Annual Conference; provided that candidates for admission under this or the preceding clause shall be required to answer satisfactorily the questions in ¶506.1 or ¶539.5 and provided, further, that those from other than Methodist Churches must take upon themselves the ordination vows, without the reimposition of hands. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶550.4]*

5. The Annual Conference, on recommendation of the Board of Ministry, may also receive in equal standing preachers who are on trial in the ministry of another Methodist Church, using however, special care that before they are admitted to full membership, they shall meet all the educational and other requirements. *[2002 Ed. ¶550.5]*

¶563. The Board of Ministry of an Annual Conference is required to ascertain from a minister seeking admission into its *[2002 Ed. ¶551]*

membership on credentials from another denomination whether or not membership in the effective relation was previously held in an Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore, or one of its legal predecessors, and if so, when and under what circumstances his connection with such Annual Conference was severed. *ed. 2020*

¶564. A minister seeking admission into an Annual Conference on credentials from another denomination who has previously withdrawn from membership in the effective relation in an Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore, or one of its legal predecessors shall not be admitted or readmitted without the consent of the Annual Conference from which he withdrew, or its legal successor, or the Annual Conference of which the major portion of his former conference is a part. *[2002 Ed. ¶552]* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

¶565. Whenever the ordination of a minister is recognised according to the foregoing provisions, he shall be furnished with a certificate signed by the bishop. *[2002 Ed. ¶553]*

¶566. When the orders of a minister of another church shall have been duly recognised, his certificate of ordination by the said church shall be returned to him with the following inscription written plainly across its face: *Am. 2004* *[2002 Ed. ¶554]*

Accredited by the ..... Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore, this ..... day of ..... 20 ..., as the basis of credentials. *ed. 2020*

..... President
..... Secretary

Section XII. Mission Deacons and Elders

¶567. A mission deacon or elder is one who is a member of a mission without being a member of an Annual Conference. In the election of mission deacons and elders the mission shall recommend for approval of the sponsoring Annual Conference the qualifications of all its applicants. The duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of mission itinerant deacons and elders shall be the same as those of itinerant deacons and elders who are *Am. 2004* *[2002 Ed. ¶549]*

members of an Annual Conference; and such preachers may be transferred to an Annual Conference with the status attained in the mission.

Section XIII. Responsibilities and Duties of a Pastor

¶568. The pastor(s) shall oversee the total ministry of the local church in its nurturing ministries and in fulfilling its mission of witness and service in the world by: giving pastoral support, guidance and training to the lay leadership in the church, equipping them to fulfil the ministry to which they are sent as servants under the Lordship of Christ; and providing ministry within the congregation and to the world. *[2002 Ed. ¶529]*

1. To preach the Word, have responsibility for the pulpit ministry, oversee the worship life of the congregation, read and teach the Scriptures, give special emphasis on Christian outreach, discipleship and stewardship, and engage the people in study and witness. *Am. 2012 [2002 Ed. ¶529.1]*

2. To administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper and all the other means of grace. It shall be the duty of ordained ministers before baptising infants or children to prepare the parents and sponsors by instructing them concerning the significance of Holy Baptism, the responsibilities of parents and sponsors for the Christian training of the baptised child, and how these obligations may be properly discharged. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.2]*

3. To give oversight to the total educational programme of the church. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.3]*

4. To be involved and to lead the congregation in missions, evangelistic and social outreach in order to win persons on profession of faith. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.4]*

5. To instruct candidates for membership and receive them into the Church. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.5]*

6. To perform the marriage ceremony after due counsel with the parties involved. The decision to perform the ceremony shall be the right and responsibility of the pastor. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.6]*

7. To minister to bereaved families and conduct appropriate funeral and memorial services. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.7]*

8. To provide pastoral counselling and guidance to persons with personal, ethical and spiritual issues. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.8]*

9. To visit in the homes of the church and community, especially among the sick, aged and others in need. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.9]*

10. To search out among the membership and constituency men and women for pastoral ministry and other church-related vocations: to help them interpret the meaning of the call of God, to advise and assist when they commit themselves thereto, to counsel with them concerning the course of their preparation, and to keep a careful record of such decisions. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶529.10]*

11. To give diligent pastoral leadership in ordering the life of the congregation for discipleship in the world. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.11]*

12. To give diligent pastoral leadership in ordering the life of the congregation for nurture and care in: *[2002 Ed. ¶529.12]*

a) The development of goals for fulfilling the missions of the congregation, the Annual Conference and the general Church. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.12a)]*

b) The development of plans for implementing the goals of the congregation and a process for evaluating their effectiveness. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.12b)]*

c) The selection, training and deployment of lay leadership within the congregation and the development of a process for evaluating lay leadership. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.12c)]*

13. To lead the congregation in the fulfilment of its mission through full and faithful payment of all apportioned conference commitment. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.13]*

14. To assure that the organisational concerns of the congregation are adequately provided for. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.14]*

15. To administer the provisions of *The Book of Discipline* and supervise the working programme of the local church. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.15]*

16. To give an account of their pastoral ministries to the Local Conference and to the Annual Conference if required. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.16]*

17. To make a written report to each Local Conference on the following items: *[2002 Ed. ¶529.17]*

a) The general state of the church. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.17a)]*

b) A record of persons received into the membership of the church and persons whose membership has been terminated since the last Local Conference, including how each was received or how the membership was terminated. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.17b)]*

c) Plans for future work. *[2002 Ed.¶529.17c)]*

d) Other items worthy of record. *[2002 Ed.¶529.17d)]*

18. To keep a separate membership record for each local church in the charge in which shall be noted the name with the time and manner of reception and disposal of every member of the church, including the names of preparatory members in a separate list. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.18]*

19. To enter in the permanent official records of the church accurate information concerning all baptisms and marriages. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.19]*

20. To furnish to every person uniting with the church a certificate of membership. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.20]*

21. To submit the required annual statistical report to the Annual Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶529.21]*

22. To fulfil the role of a chaplain of one or more of the Methodist Schools in Singapore if so appointed by the bishop, with the concurrence of the Annual Conference president, as described in ¶366.3. *Adopted 2016*

¶569. 1. No pastor shall without first obtaining a written consent of his district superintendent engage as an evangelist or a preacher any person who is not an Annual Conference evangelist, or a regular member of an Annual Conference, or an approved supply pastor, or a local preacher in good standing in The Methodist Church in Singapore or a preacher who is a member of a member church of the National Council of Churches, Singapore and whose faith and views are known to be consonant with the faith and practice of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *[2002 Ed. ¶530.1] Adopted 2016 ed. 2020 ed. 2020*

2. No pastor shall discontinue a preaching point in the interval between sessions of the Annual Conference without the prior consent of the Local Conference and the district superintendent. *[2002 Ed. ¶530.2]*

3. The pastor is urged to study and prepare for increasingly adequate marriage and family counselling: *[2002 Ed. ¶530.3]*

a) In planning to perform the rite of matrimony the minister shall have one or more unhurried premarital sessions with the parties to be married to emphasise the spiritual values of all phases of marital and parental life. It is recommended that he uses the manual of The Methodist Church in Singapore. It is strongly urged that these sessions be held as early as possible before the date of the wedding. *[2002 Ed. ¶530.3a)]* *ed. 2020*

b) The minister shall make his counsel available to those under the threat of marriage breakdown in order to explore every possibility of reconciliation. *[2002 Ed. ¶530.3b)]*

4. In view of the seriousness with which the Scriptures and the church regard divorce, a minister may solemnise the marriage of a divorced person only when he has satisfied himself by careful counselling that: a) the divorced person is sufficiently aware of the factors leading to the failure of the previous marriage; b) the divorced person is sincerely preparing to make the proposed marriage truly Christian; and c) sufficient time has elapsed for adequate preparation and counselling. *[2002 Ed. ¶530.4]*

Section XIV. The Episcopacy

¶570. *General Provisions.* The general plan of episcopacy is set forth in the Constitution. *[2002 Ed. ¶555]*

¶571. 1. Subject to ¶571.2, the bishop shall be elected from among the eligible itinerant elders of The Methodist Church in Singapore at the General Conference by secret ballot without nomination with a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2004* *[2002 Ed. ¶556]* *ed. 2020*

2. Before the election of the bishop, the General Conference shall determine the remuneration, fringe benefits and privileges of the episcopacy at or before its regular session in each quadrennium. *Am. 2012*

¶572. 1. The term of the episcopacy shall be a quadrennium. No elder shall be eligible to be elected if:

a) the elder has exceeded the compulsory retirement age stated in ¶554.2 in the year of election[66]; or *Am. 2008 [2002 Ed. ¶557] Am. 2024*

b) the elder had been elected previously to three full terms as bishop. *Am. 2012*

¶573. The bishop to be elected shall be a citizen of Singapore and shall have at least ten years membership in full connection with his Annual Conference or its antecedent Annual Conferences by the preceding calendar year. *Am. 2008 [2002 Ed. ¶558]*

¶574. The bishop during his term of office shall not concurrently be the president of an Annual Conference. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶559]*

¶575. If a bishop under the age of 65 is not re-elected, then at the expiry of the episcopal term he shall be returned to membership as itinerant elder in the Annual Conference. His term of office shall expire at the close of the General Conference at which his successor is elected, and he shall therefore be entitled to participate as a bishop in the consecration of his successor. Upon the completion of the episcopal term, a bishop who will become a retired minister of the Annual Conference may be conferred the title of Bishop Emeritus by action of the General Conference. Alternatively, a bishop who has completed the episcopal term and retired may be conferred the title of Bishop Emeritus by action of the General Conference. *Am. 2012 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶560] Am. 2024*

¶576. The bishop shall be consecrated at the session of the General Conference at which the election takes place, or at an adjourned session thereof, or at a time and place designated by the Conference. At the consecration service at least one bishop within the Methodist tradition shall be present. *[2002 Ed. ¶561]*

¶576A. 1. The office of bishop shall become vacant: *Am. 2016 [2013 Ed. ¶381.1A]*

a) upon death of the bishop;

b) if the bishop resigns by notice in writing to the General

[66] Provision effective from the regular quadrennial session of the General Conference in 2028. Previous ineligibility criterion was liability to compulsory retirement during the term being considered.

Conference Executive Council; or

c) if the bishop is removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Conference upon a two-thirds majority vote recommendation by the General Conference Executive Council.

2. If the majority present and voting of the Council of Episcopacy have reason to believe that, due to: *[2013 Ed. ¶381.2]*

a) inability from infirmity of body or mind, the bishop is no longer able to properly discharge the functions of his office; or

b) any other sufficiently serious cause it is in the best interest of the Church that the bishop resigns, the bishop shall be so informed.

3. Where the bishop does not resign in a case involving infirmity of body or mind, the Council on Episcopacy may by majority vote of those present and voting request him to undergo a medical examination by a panel of three registered practitioners (one of whom may but need not be the bishop's own physician) and such panel shall be appointed by the Council on Episcopacy after consultation with the members of the Council of Presidents (excluding the bishop) and shall report to the Council on Episcopacy on whether the bishop's ability to discharge the functions of his office has been impaired by reason of his physical or mental condition. *[2013 Ed. ¶381.3]*

4. If the bishop does not undergo the medical examination by the panel or does not allow such panel to report its findings to the Council on Episcopacy or the panel is of the opinion that the bishop's ability to discharge the functions of his office has been impaired by reason of his physical or mental condition, the Council on Episcopacy shall report the matter to the General Conference Executive Council. *[2013 Ed. ¶381.4]*

5. Where the bishop does not resign in a case involving sufficiently serious cause, the Council on Episcopacy may by a majority vote of those present and voting recommend to the General Conference Executive Council that the bishop be removed from office and shall in doing so, state the ground(s) of such *[2013 Ed. ¶381.5]*

recommendation.

6. Upon receiving a recommendation pursuant to ¶¶576A.3, 576A.4 or 576A.5, the General Conference Executive Council shall be convened as soon as practicable on a date decided by the Council of Presidents (excluding the bishop) or a date agreed by a majority of the General Conference Executive Council. At such duly convened meeting, a recommendation that the bishop may be removed from office may be passed by a two-thirds majority of the General Conference Executive Council present and voting. The bishop involved shall not be eligible to chair or vote in the General Conference Executive Council when it makes its determination (and a vice-chairperson or, in the absence of a chairperson, a substantive member elected for the purpose shall preside over the Council when it considers and makes its determination) but the bishop shall be informed of the convening of the meeting and have the right of voice. *[2013 Ed. ¶381.6]* *ed. 2017*

7. Upon a recommendation made by the General Conference Executive Council, pursuant to ¶576A.6 to remove the bishop, the General Conference Executive Council shall convene the General Conference as soon as practicable on a date decided by the Council of Presidents (excluding the bishop) or a date agreed by a majority of the General Conference Executive Council. At such duly convened session, the bishop may be removed from office if a two-thirds majority of the General Conference present and voting so decides. The bishop involved shall not be eligible to chair or vote in the General Conference when it makes its determination but the bishop shall be informed of the convening of the session and shall have the right of voice. *[2013 Ed. ¶381.6A] Am. 2024* *ed. 2017*

8. Nothing herein shall preclude a bishop who has been removed from office as bishop pursuant to these provisions from also being subject to the provisions of ¶¶742–761A in his capacity as minister. *[2013 Ed. ¶381.7]*

¶577. If a vacancy occurs in the episcopacy before the regular session of the General Conference, the Executive Council shall have power to call a special session of the General Conference to *Am. 2012 [2002 Ed. ¶562]*

elect a bishop. The years served by a bishop elected to fill a vacancy shall not be counted against the eligibility of the minister so elected to serve the full three terms as provided in ¶572.

¶578. The residence and office of the bishop shall be fixed by the General Conference in consultation with the bishop. *[2002 Ed. ¶563]*

¶579. *Duties, Powers and Limitations of the Bishop.* The duties of the bishop are: *[2002 Ed. ¶564]*

1. To oversee the spiritual and connectional affairs of the Church. *[2002 Ed. ¶564.1]*

2. To preside at General Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶564.2]*

3. To serve as chairperson of the General Conference, the General Conference Executive Council, the Council of Presidents, the Council on Education and the Council of Trustees; and as a member of General Conference agencies. *Am. 2012 [2002 Ed. ¶564.3]*

4. To oversee the organisation of such missions as may be authorised pursuant to *The Book of Discipline*. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶564.4]*

5. To make connectional appointments or assignments and extra-Methodist Church appointments or assignments: *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶564.5]*

a) of ministers of Annual Conferences: (1) within General Conference, but outside Annual Conference; and (2) outside The Methodist Church in Singapore with the concurrence of the Annual Conference president concerned; and *Adopted 2004 ed. 2020*

b) of lay persons after consultation with the Council of Presidents and with the concurrence of the Annual Conference president of which the person concerned belongs. *Adopted 2004*

6. Pursuant to ¶579.5a), if the person concerned is a minister, to make appointments or assignments in the General Conference or General Conference agencies as permitted under *The Book of Discipline* or as authorised by General Conference or General Conference Executive Council after consultation with the Council of Presidents; and with the concurrence of the Annual Conference president. *Am. 2012 Adopted 2004*

7. Pursuant to ¶579.5b), if the person concerned is a lay person, to make appointments or assignments within the General *Am. 2012 Adopted 2004*

Conference or General Conference agencies as permitted under *The Book of Discipline* or as authorised by the General Conference or the General Conference Executive Council and after consultation with the Council of Presidents after consultation with and with the concurrence of the Annual Conference president.

8. To consecrate bishops, to install presidents, to ordain elders, deacons and diaconal ministers, and to see that the names of the persons ordained and consecrated by him be entered in the journals of the Annual Conferences, and that proper credentials be furnished to these persons. *[2002 Ed. ¶564.6] Am. 2020*

9. To travel throughout the connection at large. *[2002 Ed. ¶564.7]*

10. To represent The Methodist Church in Singapore in all matters related to other church bodies or government, after consultation with the Council of Presidents. *Am. 2012 [2002 Ed. ¶564.8]*

11. To discharge such other duties as *The Book of Discipline* may direct. *[2002 Ed. ¶564.9]*

¶580. The following provisions and limitations shall be observed when fixing appointments or assignments: *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶565]*

1. On the request in each case of an appropriate Methodist official, agency or institution, and after consultation with the Council of Presidents, he may make appointments or assignments for specified periods of time of positions in or through Methodist and Methodist-related agencies; provided that in each case he has the concurrence of the president of the Annual Conference in which the person concerned is a member. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶565.1]*

2. On the request in each case of an appropriate official, agency or institution, and after consultation with the Council of Presidents, he may make appointments or assignments for specified periods of time to positions in non-Methodist agencies, *provided* that in each case he has the concurrence of the president and the confirmation by two-thirds majority vote of the Annual Conference to which the person concerned belongs, and further *provided* that in no such case shall The Methodist Church in Singapore incur any financial responsibility. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶565.2]* *ed. 2020*

Section XV. The Presidency

¶581. The general plan for the presidency is set forth in the Constitution. *[2002 Ed. ¶566]*

¶582. The president of each Annual or Provisional Annual Conference shall be elected by the respective Annual or Provisional Annual Conference by secret ballot without nominations with a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. *[2002 Ed. ¶567]*

¶583. 1. The term of the presidency shall be a quadrennium. No elder shall be eligible to be elected if: *Am. 2004* *[2002 Ed. ¶568]*

a) the elder has exceeded the compulsory retirement age stated in ¶554.2 in the year of election[67]; or *Am. 2008* *Am. 2024*

b) the elder had been elected previously to three full terms as president. *Am. 2012*

¶584. The president to be elected shall be a citizen of Singapore and shall have at least ten years' membership in full connection with an Annual Conference or its antecedent Annual Conferences by the preceding calendar year, provided that in the event that there be less than two persons with the requisite years of membership the minimum number of years of membership shall be fixed by the Annual Conference to provide for at least two candidates for that particular election; however, the Annual Conference shall exercise caution not to reduce the number of years of membership to such an extent as to defeat the purpose of the membership provision. If, notwithstanding the lowering of the minimum number of years of membership as provided in this paragraph, only one person meets the requirement for membership years, that person shall be declared the sole candidate and duly elected for that particular election. *Am. 2012* *Am. 2008* *[2002 Ed. ¶569]* *Am. 2024*

¶585. The president elected by the Annual or Provisional Annual Conference shall be entitled to exercise the powers of the presidency from the time of election and shall be installed at the *Am. 2008* *[2002 Ed. ¶570]*

[67] Provision effective from the regular quadrennial session of the General Conference in 2028. Previous ineligibility criterion was liability to compulsory retirement during the term being considered.

session of the conference at which the election took place, or at an adjourned session thereof, or at a time and place designated by the conference. He shall be installed by the bishop with the assistance of elders.

¶585A. The office of president shall become vacant: *Adopted 2012*

1. upon death of the president;

2. if the president resigns by notice in writing to the Executive Board; or

3. if the president is removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Board.

¶586. 1. If a vacancy occurs in the presidency before the expiration of the term, the Executive Board shall call a special session of the Annual Conference to elect a president. The years served by a president elected to fill a vacancy shall not be counted against the eligibility of the minister so elected to serve the full three terms as provided in ¶583. In the event of no person being available in a Provisional Annual Conference for election as president, the bishop and the Council of Presidents shall be responsible for its administration. *Am. 2012 [2002 Ed. ¶571.1]*

2. Until such time as a president is elected by the Annual Conference, the Council of Presidents shall appoint an acting president who shall hold office until a president is elected pursuant to ¶586.1. The acting president shall be a minister in full connection eligible to be president of an Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore and may be appointed from that Annual Conference or from the other Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church in Singapore. The acting president shall discharge all functions of the president until a president is elected. *Am. 2012 [2002 Ed. ¶571.2]* *ed. 2020* *ed. 2020*

¶587. 1. If the majority present and voting of the Board of Presidency have reason to believe that due to any sufficiently serious cause or inability from infirmity of body or mind, a president is no longer able to properly discharge the functions of his office but the president does not wish to resign, the Board of Presidency shall reconvene to consider the matter. If by majority vote of those present and voting, the Board of Presidency decides *Am. 2012 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶572]*

that it is in the best interests of the Church the president resigns, he shall be so informed.

2. Where the president does not resign in a case involving infirmity of body or mind, the Board of Presidency may by majority vote of those present and voting request him to undergo a medical examination by a panel of registered medical practitioners (one of whom may but need not be the president's own physician) and such panel shall be appointed by the Board of Presidency after consultation with the members of the Council of Presidents (excluding the president involved) and shall report to the Board of Presidency on whether the president's ability to discharge the functions of his office has been impaired by reason of his physical or mental condition. *Am. 2012*
Adopted 2004

3. If the president does not undergo the medical examination by the panel or does not allow such panel to report its findings to the Board of Presidency or the panel is of the opinion that the president's ability to discharge the functions of his office has been impaired by reason of his physical or mental condition, the Board of Presidency shall report the matter to the Executive Board. *Am. 2012*

4. Where the president does not resign in a case involving sufficiently serious cause, the Board of Presidency may by a majority vote of those present and voting recommend to the Executive Board that the president be removed from office and shall in doing so, state the ground(s) of such recommendation. *Adopted 2012*

5. Upon receiving a recommendation pursuant to ¶¶587.3 or 587.4, the Executive Board shall be convened as soon as practicable on a date decided by the Council of Presidents (excluding the president concerned) or a date agreed by a majority of the Executive Board. At such duly convened meeting, the president may be removed from office if a two-thirds majority of the Executive Board so decides. The president involved shall not be eligible to chair or vote in the Executive Board when it makes its determination (and a vice-chairperson or, in the absence of a vice-chairperson, a substantive member elected for the purpose shall preside over the board when it considers and makes its determination) but the *Adopted 2012*

president shall be informed of the convening of the meeting and have the right of voice.

6. Nothing herein shall preclude a president who has been removed from office as president pursuant to these provisions from also being subject to the provisions of ¶¶742–761 in his capacity as a minister. *Adopted 2012*

¶588. The annual budget for the office of the presidency and the place of residence shall be fixed by the Annual or Provisional Annual Conference concerned. *[2002 Ed. ¶573]*

¶589. *Duties, Powers and Limitations of Presidents.* The duties of a president are: *[2002 Ed. ¶574]*

1. To oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of his Annual Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶574.1]*

2. To preside at his Annual Conference and to exercise executive authority over all affairs of his conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶574.2]*

3. To form the districts after consultation with the Executive Board and after the number of districts has been determined by vote of the Annual Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶574.3]*

4. To fix the appointments of the preachers and workers of the Annual Conference after consultation with the Board of Appointments and to report in writing such appointments to the bishop. *Am. 2012 [2002 Ed. ¶574.4]*

5. To fix the Local Conference membership of all ministers who are appointed to attend theological school. *[2002 Ed. ¶574.5]*

6. To permit or authorise the transfer of a ministerial member or worker in his Annual Conference to another Conference when this has been agreed upon by all concerned and with the concurrence of the ministerial session of the relevant Annual Conference. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶574.6]*

7. To permit a ministerial member or worker in his Annual Conference to be appointed to a connectional responsibility in the General Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶574.7]*

8. To travel throughout his Annual Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶574.8]*

9. To serve on the Council of Presidents. *[2002 Ed. ¶574.9]*

10. To discharge such other duties as *The Book of Discipline* may direct. *Am. 2012 [2002 Ed. ¶574.10]*

¶590. The following provisions and limitations shall be observed when fixing the appointments: *[2002 Ed. ¶575]*

1. He shall make appointments to pastoral charges annually after consultation with the Board of Appointments and having openly declared to the Board his intended appointments, provided that before the final and official declaration of the appointments he shall announce openly to the Board his appointments; and provided, further, that before the final announcement of appointments is made the district superintendents shall consult the pastors concerning their specific appointments except when the pastors involved have left the seat of the Annual Conference without the permission of the Annual Conference. *Am. 2012 ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶575.1]*

2. He may make or change the appointments in the interval between sessions of the Annual Conference as necessity may require, after consultation with the Board of Appointments. *ed. 2006 [2002 Ed. ¶575.2]*

3. He shall appoint the district superintendents annually after consultation with the Executive Board, but he shall not appoint any minister a superintendent for more than six years in any consecutive eight years. *[2002 Ed. ¶575.3]*

4. On the recommendation of the Board of Witness and Evangelism confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Annual Conference, he may appoint an effective member of the Annual Conference as conference evangelist; provided that the appointee shall meet the standards set by the Board of Witness and Evangelism for conference evangelist. *Am. 2012 [2002 Ed. ¶575.4]*

5. He may appoint a member of the Annual Conference who desires to attend school to any course of programme or studies in an accredited or approved school or institution. *Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶575.5]*

6. He shall not appoint any preacher who has been rejected as an applicant, or who has been discontinued or located, except at his own request, unless the Annual Conference, at the time of such rejection, discontinuance or location, shall give such liberty; and he shall not appoint as a supply pastor preacher who has previously *[2002 Ed. ¶575.6]*

been expelled from the ministry or has surrendered his credentials to an Annual Conference unless the conference to which he surrendered his credentials, or from which he was expelled, restores his credentials or recommends it.

7. Every itinerant minister, unless retired, supernumerary, on sabbatical leave or under arrest of character, must receive an appointment. *ed. 2006 Am. 2004 [2002 Ed. ¶575.7]*

8. When a president judges it necessary, he may, after consultation with the Executive Board, subdivide a circuit, station or mission and appoint the pastors thereto; and he may unite two or more circuits or stations and appoint one pastor for the united congregations. *[2002 Ed. ¶575.8]*

Section XVI. Schools of Theology

¶591. 1. The schools of theology of The Methodist Church in Singapore and those with which it is officially related, are established and maintained for the education of ministers and church workers. They exist for the benefit of the whole Church and the Church shall contribute to their support as a part of its general giving. *[2002 Ed. ¶576.1] ed. 2020*

2. The schools of theology to which The Methodist Church in Singapore shall be officially related are Trinity Theological College, Singapore and other theological schools approved by the General Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶576.2] ed. 2020*

3. No school of theology shall be established without first submitting its proposed organisation and clarification to the Executive Council of the General Conference for prior approval, and without securing ratification of the General Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶576.3]*

4. Before a school of theology can be recognised or approved, the General Conference must first satisfy itself that the doctrine and policy of the school are not in variance with Methodist policy and doctrine, and that its academic credentials are of sufficient standard. *[2002 Ed. ¶576.4]*

¶592. The schools of theology of The Methodist Church in Singapore, in addition to preparing their students for effective *[2002 Ed. ¶577] ed. 2020*

service for Christ and the Church, shall provide in their curricula courses in Methodist history, polity and doctrine.

¶593. The Methodist and Methodist-related schools of theology share with the Boards of Ministry the responsibility for the selection and education of young people for admission to the Annual Conferences. *[2002 Ed. ¶578]*

1. It is recommended therefore that these schools, before admitting a candidate for the Methodist ministry as a theological student, shall: a) inquire into his personal character and promise of usefulness in the ministry; b) require satisfactory evidence of his having been licensed to preach; and c) require a letter of recommendation from the Board of Ministry of his Annual Conference. *[2002 Ed. ¶578.1]*

2. It is further recommended that, when such a candidate has been admitted, the school shall give careful attention to his progress in studies and his personal and religious development to determine whether he should be continued in his preparation for the ministry. *[2002 Ed. ¶578.2]*

When a candidate's progress is adjudged to be unsatisfactory, he should not be permitted to continue. Notification of the termination of his relationship in the school shall be given by the school to the Registrar of the Board of Ministry of his Annual Conference.

Chapter Six
DISCIPLINARY QUESTIONS

¶601.

Section I. Organisation and General Business

1. Who are elected for the quadrennium:
   Secretary?
   Statistician?
   Treasurer?
2. Is the Annual Conference incorporated?
3. a) What officers handling funds of the Conference have been bonded, and in what amounts?
   b) Have the books of said officers or persons been audited?
4. Have the Conference boards and committees been appointed or elected?
5. Have the secretaries, treasurers and statisticians kept their respective records?
6. What is the report of:
   Conference statistician?
   Conference treasurer?
7. What are the reports of the district superintendents as to the status of the work within their districts?
8. What is the current salary scheme for pastors?
9. Are there Conference claimants and if so, have their claims been met?
10. What are the apportionments to this Conference for the General Conference?
11. What are the reports, recommendations and plans of the Conference agencies?
12. What Methodist institutions or organisations are approved by the Conference for annual support?
13. a) Who is the Conference lay leader?
    b) What is his report?
    c) Who are the district and associate district lay leaders?
14. What churches have been:
    Organised?
    Merged?

Discontinued?
Relocated, and to what address?
Transferred into this Conference and with what membership?

Section II. Pertaining to Ministerial Relations

15. Are all ministerial members of the Conference blameless in their life and official administration?
16. Who constitute the Conference Board of Investigation for (forthcoming year)?
17. Who are:
    Student approved supply pastors?
    Full-time pastors?
    Part-time pastors?
18. What approved supply pastors or church (religious) workers are credited with annuity claim on account of full-time service during the past year? (Prior consultation between Conference Board on Pensions and district superintendents required before answering this question.)
19. What preachers, coming from other evangelical churches, have had their orders recognised:
    As local deacons?
    As local elders?
20. Who have been admitted from other evangelical churches as travelling preachers:
    a) As members on trial:
       Elders?
       Deacons?
    b) As members in full connection:
       Elders?
       Deacons?
21. Who have been admitted on trial:
    a) With degrees or diplomas from approved theological schools?
    b) With degrees from approved colleges not accredited by the General Conference and credits from approved theological schools?
    c) After completion of two full years of ministerial course of study under the supervision of the Board on the Ministry and served for two consecutive years as a pastor or an approved supply pastor?

d) With partial college credit, completion of the four-year course of study, and six years' service as an approved supply pastor?
e) With degrees from approved colleges and completion of the introductory studies for the ministry and the first two years of the course of study?

22. Who are continued on trial, and what progress have been made in their ministerial studies:
    a) As students in approved theological schools?
    b) As graduates of theological schools?
    c) In the four-year course of ministerial studies?
    d) In the four-year graduate courses of study?
23. Who on trial are discontinued?
24. Who are admitted into full connection?
25. What have been elected deacons:
    a) Theological students?
    b) Members on trial in the course of studies?
    c) Approved supply pastors?
    d) Missionaries?
    e) Chaplains?
26. Who have been ordained deacons?
27. Who have been elected elders:
    a) Theological students?
    b) Course of study graduates?
    c) Missionaries?
    d) Chaplains?
28. Who have been ordained elders?
29. Who have been admitted or ordained to accommodate other Conferences:
    a) Admitted:
       On trial?
       Into full connection?
    b) Ordained after election by this Conference:
       Deacons?
       Elders?
    c) Ordained after election by other Conferences:
       Deacons?
       Elders?

30. Who are re-admitted:
    As deacons?
    As elders?
31. What retired members have been made effective?
32. Who have been received by transfer?
33. Who have been transferred out?
34. Who have had their Conference membership terminated:
    a) By voluntary location?
    b) By involuntary location?
    c) By withdrawal?
    d) By judicial procedure (expelled)?
35. a) What ministerial members have died during the year:
       While in effective relation?
       While in active retirement or otherwise?
    b) What approved supply pastors have died during the year?
36. Who are the supernumerary ministers, and for what number of years consecutively has each held this relation?
37. Who are granted sabbatical leave?
38. What ministerial members have been retired:
    This year?
    Previously?
39. What approved supply pastors have been retired:
    This year?
    Previously?
40. Who are appointed to attend school:
    a) Members on trial?
    b) Members in full connection?
41. a) What is the number:
       Of pastoral charges?
       Of approved supply pastors?
       Received on trial?
       Received into full connection?
       Transferred in?
       Transferred out?
       Received from other evangelical churches?

Re-admitted?
Discontinued?
Withdrawn?
Expelled?
Located?
Deceased?
Of lay preachers?
Of women under appointment?
Of retired ministers made effective?
Of retired ministers serving as supply pastors?
Of district parsonages, with their total value and indebtedness thereon?

b) What is the number of ministers:
   (1) On trial:
      As pastors?
      Under special appointment?
      To attend school?
      Total?
   (2) In full connection:
      As pastors and district superintendents?
      Under special appointment?
      Appointed to attend school?
      On sabbatical leave?
      On furlough?
      As heads of Methodist institutions?
      Total effective?
      Retired?
      Supernumerary?
   (3) Total of all ministers?

42. What other personal notation should be made?

Section III. Concluding Business

43. Where are the detailed objectives of this Conference for the coming year?
44. What shall the next session of the Conference be held?
45. Is there any other business?
46. What changes have been made in appointments since the last Conference

sessions?

47. Where are the preachers stationed for the ensuing year?

Chapter Seven
JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

Section I. The Judicial Council

¶701. *Judicial Authority Within The Methodist Church in Singapore.* Within The Methodist Church in Singapore, judicial authority shall be vested in the Judicial Council and such agencies as may be provided by *The Book of Discipline*. The Judicial Council shall be the highest body within the judicial system established for The Methodist Church in Singapore and shall have the authority and powers as specified in the Constitution, ¶43 and *The Book of Discipline* at ¶¶702–704.

Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶701) ed. 2020

ed. 2020

¶702. *Jurisdiction and Authority of the Judicial Council.* The Judicial Council shall have the jurisdiction and authority to:

Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶¶707–708)

1. Hear and determine the constitutionality (validity or legality), meaning, application and/or effect of *The Book of Discipline* or any portion thereof upon petition by:

a) the General Conference;

b) the General Conference Executive Council;

c) any General Conference agency on matters relating to or affecting the work of such agency;

d) a bishop or president on matters relating to the bishop's or president's administration or the work of the bishop's or president's conference; or

e) any Annual Conference, on matters relating to Annual Conferences or the work of that conference.

2. Hear and determine the constitutionality (validity or legality), meaning, application and/or effect of any legislation of the General Conference upon petition by:

a) the General Conference;

b) the General Conference Executive Council;

c) any General Conference agency on matters relating to or affecting the work of such agency;

d) a bishop or president on matters relating to the bishop's or president's administration or the work of the bishop's or president's conference; or

e) any Annual Conference, on matters relating to Annual Conferences or the work of that conference.

See also Constitution, Article 43.

3. Hear and determine the constitutionality (validity or legality), meaning, application and/or effect of any action of the General Conference upon petition or appeal by:

a) the bishop;

b) the General Conference or at least one-fifth of the General Conference present and voting;

c) a majority of the General Conference Executive Council present and voting;

d) any General Conference agency on matters relating to or affecting the work of such agency;

e) a bishop or president on matters relating to the bishop's or president's administration or the work of the bishop's or president's conference; or

f) any Annual Conference, on matters relating to Annual Conferences or the work of that conference.

4. Hear and determine the constitutionality (validity or legality), meaning, application and/or effect of any proposed legislation upon the request of at least one-fifth of the General Conference present and voting or a majority of the General Conference Executive Council present and voting.

5. Hear and determine the validity or legality of any action taken by the General Conference Executive Council upon appeal by at least one-third of the members present and voting or upon request of the bishop.

6. Hear and determine the validity or legality of any action taken by a General Conference agency upon:

a) an appeal by at least one-third of the members thereof present and voting;

b) a request by the General Conference Executive Council; or

c) a request by an Annual Conference or a Provisional Annual Conference, where such conference asserts that the action affects the conference.

7. a) Pass upon, review and affirm, vary or reverse any decision of law made by bishops, presidents or presiding officers in District Conferences, Annual Conferences, or Provisional Annual Conferences or the General Conference upon such question of law submitted to the relevant conference in writing in the regular business of a session. Any decision of law made at a conference shall become the law of the Church to the extent that it is affirmed by the Judicial Council subject to any variation or reversal made at such time. Subsequent decisions of the Judicial Council shall not invalidate previous decisions of law made and passed upon by the Judicial Council.

b) For the purposes of ¶702.7a), each bishop, president or presiding officer, shall make a written report to the Judicial Council of all decisions of law within 60 days of their being made.

8. Hear and determine any appeal from a decision on a question of law made by a bishop, president or other presiding officer in a District, Annual or Provisional Annual Conference or the General Conference upon appeal made by one-fifth of that conference present and voting.

9. Hear and determine any appeal against the decision of a Disciplinary Tribunal as provided in ¶754 and ¶771.

10. Review any decision of a Disciplinary Tribunal either on the initiative of the Judicial Council or on the application of:

a) any person who is a party to the proceedings before the Disciplinary Tribunal; or

b) any person who satisfies the Judicial Council that such person is affected by such decision, on the ground that such decision is at variance with *The Book of Discipline*, or a prior decision of the Judicial Council on a question of law and for this purpose:

(1) where such party or person applies for review, the applicant

shall within 21 days of receipt of the decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal, submit to the chairperson of the Judicial Council the question(s) of law for determination by the Judicial Council; together with a summary of the relevant facts in the form of a written statement;

(2) where the review is initiated by the Judicial Council on its own motion, the Disciplinary Tribunal shall, at the request of the Judicial Council, submit to the chairperson of the Judicial Council within 21 days of such request, a summary of the relevant facts and the question(s) of law on which the decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal was based;

(3) the Judicial Council shall provide its decision or opinion on questions of law based on the statement of relevant facts submitted by the applicant or the Disciplinary Tribunal as the case may be; and

(4) the Judicial Council may amend the question(s) of law as formulated by the applicant or the Disciplinary Tribunal and may issue a decision or opinion on additional questions of laws if it considers it necessary to do so.

Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶707)

¶703. *Powers of the Judicial Council.*

1. The Judicial Council shall have such powers as are vested in it by *The Book of Discipline*.

2. Without prejudice to the generality of ¶703.1, the Judicial Council shall have the powers set out below:

a) Power to issue to any person or agency, any direction or order for the enforcement of any right conferred by *The Book of Discipline* or for any other purpose, including but not limited to a mandatory order and a prohibiting order.

b) Power to make rulings in the nature of declaratory decisions.

c) Power to give such directions or make such orders to any person as may be necessary to give effect to any decision(s) and to prescribe the mean(s) through which such directions or orders shall be implemented in the absence of specific provision in *The Book of Discipline*.

d) Power, whether before or after any proceedings in Chapter Seven are commenced, to provide for the preservation of evidence by seizure, detention, inspection, photographing, the taking of samples, or in any other manner.

e) Power to extend or abridge the time prescribed by *The Book of Discipline* for doing any act or taking any proceeding under Chapter Seven, whether the application therefore is made before or after the expiration of the time prescribed. This provision shall be in addition to the operation of any provision in *The Book of Discipline* conferring the power for extending or abridging time on any other person.

f) Power to dismiss or stay proceedings under Chapter Seven where the matter in question is finally adjudged (*res judicata*) between the parties, or where by reason of multiplicity of proceedings or the matter being before the courts, the proceedings under Chapter Seven ought not to be continued.

g) Power to decline to hear any matter in any instance in which it determines that it does not have the jurisdiction to hear such matter.

¶704. The Judicial Council shall have such other authority, duties and powers as may be conferred upon it by the General Conference from time to time. *Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶711)*

¶705. *Finality of Decisions.* All decisions of the Judicial Council shall be final. However, when the Judicial Council declares any act of the General Conference then in session unconstitutional, that decision shall be reported back to that General Conference immediately. *Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶710)*

¶706. *Composition of the Judicial Council.* 1. The Judicial Council shall consist of nine substantive members: *Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶701-702)*

a) four members who are ministers; and

b) five members who are lay persons, *provided* that each Annual Conference shall be represented by at least one minister and one lay member.

2. Members of The Methodist Church in Singapore who are not less than 30 years of age and not more than 70 years of age and in good standing for not less than ten years shall be eligible to be *ed. 2020*

elected to the Judicial Council provided always that neither a serving bishop nor a serving president shall be eligible to be so elected and a serving member of the Judicial Council shall vacate office as a member of the Judicial Council upon election to the episcopacy or presidency, as the case may be.

3. There shall be four alternates for the ministerial members and five alternates for the lay persons and the eligibility requirements for alternates shall be the same as for substantive members on the Judicial Council. Alternates shall participate in every session of the Judicial Council but without vote.

¶707. *Election of Members and Alternates.*

Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶701.1 and ¶702)

1. The General Conference shall elect members of the Judicial Council.

2. The procedures for electing substantive members of the Judicial Council are as follows:

a) At each quadrennial session of the General Conference, each Annual Conference shall present its nominations of two ministers and two lay persons for election to the Judicial Council. An Annual Conference shall have made such nominations at a regular or special session of the Annual Conference preceding the first day of the regular session of that General Conference.

b) When the nominations referred to in a) above are announced, further nominations from the floor of the General Conference may be made. The numbers nominated from the floor shall not exceed the numbers nominated by the Annual Conferences. Where greater numbers are nominated from the floor, the General Conference shall by secret ballot and majority vote reduce the number to equal the aggregate numbers nominated by the Annual Conferences.

c) The names of all nominees, and a biographical sketch of each nominee which does not exceed 100 words, shall be published at least 24 hours prior to the time of election, which shall be set by action of the General Conference at the session at which the nominations are made; and from these nominations the General Conference shall without discussion elect by secret ballot and by

majority vote the necessary numbers of ministerial and lay members.

3. The alternate members shall be elected in the following manner: From the ministerial and lay nominees remaining on the ballot after the election of the necessary number of substantive members of the Judicial Council, the General Conference shall by separate ballot, elect the number of ministerial and lay alternates.

¶708. *Term of Office.* *Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶701.3)*

1. The term of office of a substantive member of the Judicial Council shall be eight years; provided always that a member whose seventieth birthday precedes the first day of the regular session of a General Conference shall be released from service at the close of that General Conference from membership and responsibility in the Judicial Council, regardless of the date of expiration of office and that General Conference shall be entitled to fill that vacancy at that General Conference.

2. The term of office of an alternate member of the Judicial Council shall be four years. *(cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶701.3)*

3. The term of office of the substantive members of the Judicial Council and of the alternate members shall expire upon the adjournment of the General Conference at which their successors are elected. *(cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶704)*

¶709. *Substantive Vacancies.* *Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶703)*

1. If a vacancy in the substantive membership of the Judicial Council occurs during the interim between sessions of the General Conference, a ministerial vacancy shall be filled by the first elected ministerial alternate and a lay vacancy by the first elected lay alternate, provided always that each Annual Conference shall be represented in the substantive membership of the Judicial Council by at least one ministerial member and one lay member. The alternate filling such vacancy shall hold office as a member of the Judicial Council for the unexpired term of the member whom the alternate succeeds. In the event of any vacancy, it shall be the duty of the chairperson and secretary of the Judicial Council to notify the alternate entitled to fill it.

2. If vacancies occur after exhaustion of the list of alternates, the General Conference Executive Council is authorised to fill such vacancies for the remainder of the quadrennium.

¶710. *Vacancies in Alternate Membership.* If a vacancy in the alternate membership of the Judicial Council occurs during the interim between sessions of the General Conference, such vacancy shall be filled by election at the first available special session of the General Conference after such vacancy has occurred in the following manner: *Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶703)*

1. Each Annual Conference shall nominate one minister or lay person as the case may be for such vacancy at the first available session of the Annual Conference after such vacancy has occurred.

2. The nominations referred to in 1. above and a biographical sketch of each nominee which does not exceed 100 words, shall be circulated at the time of the call of the aforesaid first available special session of the General Conference.

3. The General Conference shall then elect one of the nominees to fill the vacancy.

¶711. *Recusal.* In the consideration of any matter before the Judicial Council, if it is determined by a simple majority of the substantive members of the Judicial Council that a substantive or alternate member is in a position of material conflict of interest, and should be recused from involvement, that member shall be excused for the duration of such consideration and if that member is a substantive member, an alternate shall be asked to serve instead. *Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶705)*

¶712. *Meetings and Procedures.* Unless otherwise stated in *The Book of Discipline*, the Judicial Council shall: *Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶706)*

1. Provide its own method of organisation and procedure, both with respect to hearings on appeals and petitions for declaratory decisions. All parties are entitled to submit written arguments and produce such evidence under such rules as the Judicial Council may adopt from time to time.

2. Meet at the time and place of the meeting of the General Conference and shall continue in session until the adjournment of the General Conference, and at such other time as it may deem

appropriate, and at such place as it may select from time to time. Six members shall constitute a quorum. An affirmative vote of six or more members shall constitute the decision of the Judicial Council.

3. Decline to entertain an appeal or a petition for a declaratory decision in any instance in which it determines that it does not have jurisdiction to decide the matter.

¶713. *Publication of Decisions.* All decisions of the Judicial Council, together with summaries of the facts and the decision, shall be filed with the secretary of the General Conference and shall be published in the following manner:

Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶709)

1. Within 90 days following the issuance of each decision of the Judicial Council, the digest of each decision of the Judicial Council (containing brief description of the decision made) shall be published in an official publication of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

Am. 2020

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2. The summaries of the decisions of the Judicial Council rendered during each quadrennium shall be published in the General Conference journal.

Section II. Questions of Law

¶714. An appeal against a decision on a question of law made in a conference can only be lodged by that conference upon the request of at least one-fifth of that conference present and voting.

Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶707.4) See also Constitution Article 43.

¶715. The order of appeals on questions of law shall be as follows:

Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶717.4)

1. In respect of a decision of the district superintendent or elder presiding at the Local or District Conference, from the Local or District Conference to the president or other presiding officer at the Annual Conference, and from the decision on such question of the president or other presiding officer at the Annual Conference to the Judicial Council.

2. In respect of a decision of a president or other presiding

officer at an Annual Conference, from the Annual Conference to the Judicial Council.

3. In respect of a decision of a bishop or other presiding officer at the General Conference, from the General Conference to the Judicial Council.

Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶717.4)

¶716. When an appeal is taken on a question of law, written notice of the same shall be served on the secretary of the body in which the decision has been rendered. It shall be the secretary's duty to ensure that an exact statement of the question submitted and the ruling of the chairperson thereon shall be entered in the journal. The secretary shall then prepare and certify a copy of the question and ruling and transmit the same to the secretary of the body to which the appeal is taken. The secretary who thus receives the said certified copy shall present the same in open conference and as soon as practicable lay it before the chairperson for a ruling thereon, which ruling must be rendered before the final adjournment of that body. The said ruling together with the original question and ruling may be entered in the journal of that conference. The same course shall be followed in all subsequent appeals.

Section III. Disciplinary Proceedings for Ministers

(cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶¶712–718)

Adopted 2012

¶742. *Definitions.* In this Section, unless the context otherwise requires:

"Committee of Investigation" or "COI" means a Committee of Investigation constituted under ¶747;

"day" means calendar day;

"Disciplinary Panel" means a Disciplinary Panel constituted under ¶750.3;

"Disciplinary Tribunal" means a Disciplinary Tribunal constituted under ¶¶750.1–750.2;

"Inquiry Committee" means an Inquiry Committee constituted under ¶744.2;

"minister" means an elder, deacon, minister on trial, supply pastor, diaconal minister or retired minister of an Annual Conference;

"misconduct" means:

1. immorality, crime or other unchristian conduct;
2. habitual neglect of duty as a member or officer of the church;
3. disobedience to the Order and Discipline of The Methodist Church in Singapore; *ed. 2020*
4. disseminating doctrines contrary to the Articles of Religion or other established standards of doctrine of the Church;
5. unministerial conduct or maladministration in office; or
6. conduct that impairs seriously the discharge of his responsibilities as a minister;

"month" means calendar month;

"Respondent" means the minister who is the subject of the proceedings under this Section.

¶743. *Fair Process and Right to Trial.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The following procedures are established for the protection of the Church and individuals and to guarantee all ministerial members of the church the right to trial and of appeal.

2. At each step in the proceedings listed under this Section, efforts for reconciliation shall continue, so long as these efforts are not used to hinder fair process.

3. The presumption of innocence shall be maintained until the conclusion of the disciplinary process.

¶744. *Inquiry Committee.* *Adopted 2012*

1. If it is represented to the Board of Ministry of an Annual Conference by any person that a minister of that Annual Conference has been guilty of misconduct, or a minister asserts a right of trial in respect of any misconduct alleged against that minister, the chairperson of the Board (or, where the chairperson is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, a nominee of the Council of Presidents) shall, within 21 days of receiving the representation, convene an Inquiry Committee and forthwith refer the matter to that Inquiry Committee for inquiry.

2. The Inquiry Committee shall consist of the following three members:

a) the chairperson of the Board of Ministry of the

Respondent's Annual Conference or a member of that Board of Ministry nominated by the chairperson of the Board (or, where the chairperson is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, a nominee of the Council of Presidents), who shall be the chairperson of the Inquiry Committee;

b) one member of that Board of Ministry chosen by the two chairpersons of the Boards of Ministry of the other two Annual Conferences; and

c) one elder who is a member of the Disciplinary Panel of the Respondent's Annual Conference who is not a member of that Board of Ministry chosen by the chairpersons of the Boards of Ministry of the other two Annual Conferences.

3. Where the person mentioned in ¶¶744.2a), 744.2b) or 744.2c):

a) is the Respondent or is unable to be a member of the Inquiry Committee for any reasonable cause; or

b) is otherwise unable to remain as a member of the Inquiry Committee for any reasonable cause, the person(s) responsible for appointing a replacement shall (if satisfied that such reasonable cause exists), replace such person as mentioned in ¶¶744.2a), 744.2b) or 744.2c) with another person who shall be chosen in accordance with the appropriate sub-paragraph of ¶744.2.

4. A member of an Inquiry Committee shall, notwithstanding having ceased to be a member of the Board of Ministry or Disciplinary Panel, as the case may be, on the expiry of such person's term of office, be deemed to be a member of the Board of Ministry or Disciplinary Panel until such time as the Board of Ministry has decided that the Inquiry Committee of which such person is a member has completed its work.

5. In the carrying out of its work, the Inquiry Committee may, with the concurrence of the Council of Presidents, appoint an advocate and solicitor to assist the Inquiry Committee, the costs of which shall be borne by the Respondent's Annual Conference.

¶745. *Proceedings of Inquiry Committee.* *Adopted 2012*

1. An Inquiry Committee may meet for the purposes of

business and regulate its business as the chairperson of the Inquiry Committee thinks fit.

2. The chairperson of an Inquiry Committee or a majority of its members may at any time summon a meeting of the Inquiry Committee.

3. Any question arising at any meeting of an Inquiry Committee shall be determined by a majority of votes of its members present and voting.

4. The chairperson of the Inquiry Committee shall not have a casting vote.

5. Two-thirds of the members of an Inquiry Committee shall be present to constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Inquiry Committee.

6. The Inquiry Committee shall inform the Respondent in writing of the complaint made against the Respondent and shall give the Respondent a reasonable opportunity of replying thereto before completing its review.

7. The Inquiry Committee may permit the Respondent to be represented by a minister or an advocate and solicitor or both, chosen by the Respondent.

¶746. *Findings of Inquiry Committee.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The Inquiry Committee shall complete its inquiry within 42 days of its constitution (or such longer period as the president of the Annual Conference of the Respondent may allow), and

a) when it is of the opinion that the complaint is frivolous, vexatious, misconceived or lacking in substance, it shall dismiss the matter and give reasons for the dismissal;

b) where the Inquiry Committee is of the opinion that the subject of the complaint is not serious enough to warrant proceedings under ¶747 with a view to involuntary location, expulsion from the Church, withdrawal of credentials of ordination or commissioning, or suspension from exercise of the functions of office of the Respondent, the Inquiry Committee shall state the grounds for its opinion and may cause an investigation to be made into the matter in such manner as it thinks fit and shall refer the

matter to the Board of Ministry for such action as the Board may think fit; or *ed.2016*

c) where the Inquiry Committee is of the opinion that the subject of the complaint warrants proceedings with a view to involuntary location, expulsion from the Church, withdrawal of the credentials of ordination or commissioning, or suspension from the exercise of the functions of office of the Respondent, the Inquiry Committee shall cause proceedings to be taken under ¶747.

2. Where the Inquiry Committee proceeds under ¶¶746.1a) or 746.1b), it shall within the time frame stipulated in ¶746.1 deliver a report of its review to the chairperson of the Board of Ministry and the Respondent.

3. Where the Inquiry Committee proceeds under ¶746.1c), it shall prepare a report of its review and specify charge(s) setting out the ground(s) on which proceedings are to be brought, and the chairperson of the Inquiry Committee shall deliver a copy of the report and the charge(s) to the Respondent, the chairperson of the Board of Ministry and the president of the Respondent's Annual Conference.

4. Where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, any powers exercisable by the president shall be exercised instead by the Council of Presidents and the report and charge(s) to be delivered to the president shall be delivered instead to the Council of Presidents. *ed. 2016*

5. Before the Board of Ministry takes any action pursuant to ¶746.1b), the Respondent shall be given an opportunity to be heard.

¶747. *Committee of Investigation.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The president of the Respondent's Annual Conference (or, where the president is conflicted from involvement, a nominee of the Council of Presidents) shall, within 21 days of receipt of the report and charge(s) from the Inquiry Committee delivered pursuant to ¶746.3, cause a Committee of Investigation to be convened in accordance with ¶747.3.

2. The Respondent shall be given 42 days of receipt of the

report and charges to respond in writing to the COI on the charge(s).

3. The COI shall consist of three members chosen jointly by the chairpersons of the Boards of Ministry of the two other Annual Conferences, and if they fail to so choose 14 days after being notified to do so, shall be chosen by the bishop after consulting those two chairpersons, of whom:

a) one shall be a member of the Board of Ministry of the Respondent's Annual Conference;

b) one shall be a minister from the Respondent's Annual Conference who is not a member of the Board of Ministry; and

c) one shall be a minister from either of the other two Annual Conferences whether or not a member of its respective Boards of Ministry.

4. The members of the COI shall choose from among themselves a chairperson, and if they fail to do so within seven days of its constitution, the Council of Presidents shall appoint one of them as chairperson.

5. Where the person mentioned in ¶¶747.3a), 747.3b) or 747.3c):

a) is the Respondent or is unable to be a member of the COI for any reasonable cause; or

b) is otherwise unable to remain a member of the COI for any reasonable cause, the person(s) responsible for appointing a replacement shall (if satisfied that such reasonable cause exists), replace such person as mentioned in ¶¶747.3a), 747.3b) or 747.3c) with another person who shall be chosen in accordance with the appropriate sub-paragraph of ¶747.3.

6. A present or past member of an Inquiry Committee who has been a party to any prior proceedings in a case which comes before the COI shall be disqualified from being a member of the COI.

7. A member of a COI shall, notwithstanding having ceased to be a member of the Board of Ministry, on the expiry of such person's term of office, be deemed to be a member of the Board of Ministry until such time as the Board of Ministry has decided that the COI of which such person is a member has completed its work.

8. The COI shall consider the report of the Inquiry Committee and all written responses of the Respondent submitted to the Inquiry Committee and within two months of its constitution or such longer period as the president of the Respondent's Annual Conference may permit (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, as the Council of Presidents may permit):

a) where the COI is of the opinion that the charge(s), even if proven, do not reveal chargeable misconduct, it shall dismiss the matter and give reasons for the dismissal;

b) where the COI is of the opinion that the charge(s), even if proven, are not serious enough to warrant involuntary location, expulsion from the Church, withdrawal of credentials of ordination or commissioning, or suspension from exercise of the functions of office, it may refer the matter and make recommendations of administrative action to the Board of Ministry; or

c) where the COI is of the opinion that the charge(s), if proven, are serious enough to warrant involuntary location, expulsion from the Church, withdrawal of the credentials of ordination or commissioning, or suspension from the exercise of the functions of office of the Respondent, it shall proceed pursuant to ¶¶748–749 and shall inform the Respondent of the date on which the COI will commence its investigation.

9. Before the Board of Ministry takes any action pursuant to ¶747.8b), the Respondent shall be given an opportunity to be heard.

¶748. *Proceedings of Committee of Investigation.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The COI shall complete its investigation and deliver its report pursuant to ¶748.22 within four months of its decision to proceed pursuant to ¶747.8c) or within such longer period as the president of the Respondent's Annual Conference may permit (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, as the Council of Presidents may permit).

2. The COI may meet for the purposes of business and regulate its business as the chairperson of the COI thinks fit.

3. The chairperson of the COI or a majority of its members may at any time summon a meeting of the COI.

4. Any question arising at any meeting of the COI shall be determined by a majority of votes of its members present and voting.

5. The chairperson of the COI shall not have a casting vote.

6. Two-thirds of the members of the COI shall be present to constitute a quorum for a meeting of the COI.

7. The Respondent shall be permitted to attend the investigation proceedings and:

a) to cross-examine the witnesses;

b) to give evidence on the Respondent's own behalf;

c) to have such witnesses as the Respondent may wish called on the Respondent's own behalf; and

d) to have access to any documents intended to be tendered in evidence.

8. Where the COI proposes to take into consideration any other circumstance apart from the report of the Inquiry Committee or matters arising during the investigation proceedings, it shall as soon as practicable inform the Respondent of such circumstance and allow the Respondent a reasonable opportunity to respond thereto.

9. If the Respondent fails to respond or attend at any stage before the COI, the COI shall be entitled to proceed notwithstanding such failure or absence.

10. The COI shall keep a record of its proceedings and shall attach such record to its report.

11. The COI may maintain a verbatim transcript of witnesses' testimony to be included in the record of proceedings.

12. At the proceedings, the evidence forming the basis of the charge(s) shall be presented by an elder or by an advocate and solicitor, or both, appointed by the president on behalf of the Respondent's Annual Conference (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, by the Council of Presidents).

13. The COI may permit the Respondent to be represented by a minister or an advocate and solicitor, or both, chosen by the Respondent.

14. The COI may, at any time, exclude any person representing the Respondent from the proceedings if the COI is of the view that the person has behaved improperly in the course of the proceedings or attempted to delay the proceedings.

15. The COI shall not be bound to act in a formal manner and shall not be bound by the Evidence Act or by any other law relating to evidence but may inform itself on any matter in such manner as it thinks fit.

16. The COI shall proceed with its investigation without unreasonable delay and from day to day; no adjournment shall be given except for reasons to be recorded in writing.

17. Every adjournment, with reasons therefore, shall be reported immediately to the president (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, to the Council of Presidents).

18. No adjournment shall be given for more than 14 days except with the permission of the president (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, of the Council of Presidents).

19. The COI may, in its discretion, conduct proceedings notwithstanding the absence of one of its members, and the validity of such proceedings shall not be challenged on this ground.

20. If the COI is satisfied that the Respondent under investigation or any person representing the Respondent is hampering or attempting to hamper the progress of the investigation, the COI shall administer a warning to the Respondent and, where appropriate, the person representing the Respondent; and if after such warning the COI is satisfied that the warning is being disregarded, the COI shall make a written note of this and shall proceed to carry on with and complete the inquiry in such manner as it thinks fit.

21. In the carrying out of its work, the COI may, with the

concurrence of the Council of Presidents, appoint an advocate and solicitor to assist the COI, the costs of which shall be borne by the Respondent's Annual Conference.

22. The COI shall determine whether the charge(s) are supported by the facts and shall deliver a report of its determination and the matters in support of its determination to the chairperson of the Board of Ministry of the Respondent's Annual Conference, the Respondent and (where the COI has determined that the charge(s) have been proven) the president of the Respondent's Annual Conference.

23. Where the president of the Respondent's Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement, the report intended for the president shall be delivered instead to the Council of Presidents.

24. The COI may amend the charges at its discretion provided that they do not change the nature of the charges and specifications and do not introduce new matter of which the Respondent has not had due notice.

¶749. *Findings of Committee of Investigation.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The COI in its report pursuant to ¶748.22 shall state its findings and:

a) when it is of the opinion that no misconduct has been proven, it shall dismiss the matter and give reasons for the dismissal;

b) where the COI is of the opinion that the misconduct proven is not serious enough to warrant involuntary location, expulsion from the Church, withdrawal of credentials of ordination or commissioning, or suspension from exercise of the functions of office, it shall state the grounds for its opinion and refer the matter to the Board of Ministry for such action as the Board may think fit; or *ed. 2016*

c) where the COI is of the opinion that the charge(s) are proven, it shall state the grounds for its opinion and make any recommendation of the proposed disciplinary sanctions (which may include involuntary location, expulsion from the Church, withdrawal of the credentials of ordination or commissioning, or suspension from the exercise of the functions of office, of the

Respondent).

2. Before the Board of Ministry takes any action pursuant to ¶749.1b), the Respondent shall be given an opportunity to be heard.

¶750. *Disciplinary Tribunal.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The president of the Respondent's Annual Conference, and where the president is conflicted from involvement, the bishop or a nominee of the Council of Presidents (as the case may be) shall:

a) upon receipt of an investigation report from the COI under ¶749.1c) stating its opinion that the charge(s) against the Respondent have been proven; or

b) where ¶760 applies,

cause a Disciplinary Tribunal to be convened in accordance with ¶750.2 and deliver to the Disciplinary Tribunal the record of proceedings and the report of the COI or the record of the proceedings of the court, as the case may be.

2. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall consist of:

a) a chairperson who shall be:

(1) the bishop or, where the bishop is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act or chooses not to be chairperson, a president designated by the Council of Presidents; or

(2) where the bishop and two or more members of the Council of Presidents are conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, a member of the Disciplinary Panel of the Respondent's Annual Conference chosen by a majority of the Disciplinary Panel referred to in ¶750.3;

b) four elders chosen from the Disciplinary Panel from the Respondent's Annual Conference by a majority of that Disciplinary Panel; and

c) one elder from the Disciplinary Panel of any of the Annual Conferences, chosen by the Respondent or if he fails to so choose 14 days after being notified to do so, chosen by the chairpersons of the Boards of Ministry of the two other Annual Conferences or if they fail to do so, by the chairperson of the Disciplinary Tribunal.

3. The Disciplinary Panel of each Annual Conference shall consist of:

a) not less than one-third or 12 (whichever is greater unless b) below applies) of the elders in full connection and in active service of the Annual Conference nominated by the president and elected quadrennially by the Annual Conference in the year of the regular session of the General Conference; and

b) where the number of members of the Disciplinary Panel elected pursuant to ¶750.3a) is less than 12, the remaining members shall be elders in full connection and in active service chosen by the Council of Presidents from the Disciplinary Panels of the two other Annual Conferences.

4. Where a vacancy arises in the membership of the Disciplinary Panel elected pursuant to ¶750.3a), the Executive Board of that Annual Conference is authorised to fill such vacancy for the remainder of the term of the Disciplinary Panel.

5. Where a vacancy arises in the membership of the Disciplinary Panel chosen pursuant to ¶750.3b), the president of that Annual Conference, with the concurrence of the Council of Presidents, is authorised to fill such vacancy for the remainder of the term of the Disciplinary Panel.

6. The term of office of a member of a Disciplinary Panel shall be a quadrennium.

7. Any present or past member of an Inquiry Committee or COI who has been a party to any prior proceedings in a case which comes before the Disciplinary Tribunal shall be disqualified from sitting on that Disciplinary Tribunal.

8. Where the person mentioned in ¶¶750.2b) or 750.2c):

a) is unable to be a member of the Disciplinary Tribunal for any reasonable cause; or

b) is otherwise unable to remain as a member of the Disciplinary Tribunal for any reasonable cause,

the person(s) responsible for appointing a replacement shall (if satisfied that such reasonable cause exists), replace that person as mentioned in ¶¶750.2b) or 750.2c) with another person who shall be chosen in accordance with the appropriate sub-paragraph of ¶750.2.

9. A member of a Disciplinary Tribunal shall, notwithstanding having ceased to be the bishop, a member of the Council of Presidents or Disciplinary Panel, as the case may be, on the expiry of such person's term of office, be deemed to be the bishop, a member of the Council of Presidents or Disciplinary Panel until such time as the Board of Ministry has decided that the Disciplinary Tribunal of which such person is a member has completed its work.

¶751. *Proceedings of Disciplinary Tribunal.* *Adopted 2012*

1. A Disciplinary Tribunal may meet for the purposes of business and regulate its business as the chairperson of the Disciplinary Tribunal thinks fit.

2. The chairperson of a Disciplinary Tribunal or any three of its members may at any time summon a meeting of the Disciplinary Tribunal.

3. Subject to ¶751.4 any question arising at any meeting of a Disciplinary Tribunal shall be determined by a majority of votes of its members present and voting.

4. The chairperson of a Disciplinary Tribunal shall have no voting right.

5. The authority of the chairperson of a Disciplinary Tribunal shall be limited to apprising the members of the Disciplinary Tribunal as to the Church law involved in the case, but the chairperson shall not have authority to pronounce any judgment in favour of or against the Respondent.

6. The chairperson and at least three of the other members of the Disciplinary Tribunal shall be present to constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Disciplinary Tribunal.

7. A Disciplinary Tribunal may permit the Respondent to be represented by a minister or an advocate and solicitor or both, chosen by the Respondent.

8. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall keep a record of its proceedings and shall attach the record to its report.

9. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall give the Respondent a reasonable opportunity to be heard and may, in its absolute discretion, afford such opportunity to be heard either orally or

through written submissions.

10. The report of the COI or the record of the proceedings of the court (where ¶760 applies), as the case may be, shall be presented by an elder or by an advocate and solicitor, or both, appointed by the president on behalf of the Annual Conference of the Respondent (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted or otherwise unable to act, by the Council of Presidents).

11. The Disciplinary Tribunal may where it thinks fit require the COI to reconvene to consider further evidence or further investigate any aspect of the matter (which the Disciplinary Tribunal shall specify in writing to the COI), except that the Respondent shall be given not less than 14 days' notice of such further investigation proceedings of the COI.

12. The Disciplinary Tribunal may, but shall not be required to, hear witnesses or re-evaluate any evidence. Where the Disciplinary Tribunal chooses to hear witnesses, it may maintain a verbatim transcript of witnesses' testimony for inclusion in the record of proceedings.

12A. If the Respondent fails to respond or attend at any stage before the Disciplinary Tribunal, the Disciplinary Tribunal shall be entitled to proceed, notwithstanding such failure or absence.

13. The Disciplinary Tribunal may, at any time, exclude any person representing the Respondent from the proceedings if the Disciplinary Tribunal is of the view that the person has behaved improperly in the course of the proceedings or attempted to delay the proceedings.

14. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall not be bound to act in a formal manner and shall not be bound by the Evidence Act or by any other law relating to evidence but may inform itself on any matter in such manner as it thinks fit.

15. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall proceed without unreasonable delay and from day to day; no adjournment shall be given except for reasons to be recorded in writing.

16. Every adjournment, with reasons therefore, shall be

reported immediately to the president (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, to the Council of Presidents).

17. No adjournment shall be given for more than 14 days except with the permission of the president (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, of the Council of Presidents).

18. The Disciplinary Tribunal may, in its discretion, conduct its proceedings notwithstanding the absence of one of its members, and the validity of such proceedings shall not be challenged on this ground.

19. If the Disciplinary Tribunal is satisfied that the Respondent or any person representing the Respondent is hampering or attempting to hamper the progress of its work, the Disciplinary Tribunal shall administer a warning to the Respondent and, where appropriate, the person representing the Respondent; and if after such warning the Disciplinary Tribunal is satisfied that the warning is being disregarded, the Disciplinary Tribunal shall make a written note of this and shall proceed to complete its work in such manner as it thinks fit.

¶752. *Findings of Disciplinary Tribunal.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall consider the record of proceedings and report of the COI and all other information received in the disciplinary proceedings or the record of the proceedings of the court (where ¶760 applies) and shall, within two months of its constitution or such extended period as the president (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, the Council of Presidents) grants, make its determination and deliver a report setting out its determination and the grounds of determination to the president and secretary of the Respondent's Annual Conference, the chairperson of the Board of Ministry of the Respondent's Annual Conference and the Respondent.

2. The Disciplinary Tribunal:

a) where it is of the opinion that no misconduct has been

proven, shall dismiss the matter and give reasons for the dismissal;

b) where it is of the opinion that the misconduct proven is not serious enough to warrant disciplinary sanctions in the nature of involuntary location, expulsion from the Church, withdrawal of credentials of ordination or commissioning, or suspension from exercise of the functions of office shall state the grounds for its opinion and refer the matter to the Board of Ministry for such action as the Board may think fit; or *ed. 2016*

c) where it is of the opinion that the charge(s) are proven and that disciplinary sanctions are appropriate, shall state the grounds for its opinion and determine the appropriate disciplinary sanctions to be imposed; and for this purpose, the Disciplinary Tribunal:

(1) may vary any disciplinary sanction recommended by the COI, provided always that the Disciplinary Tribunal shall not enhance the disciplinary sanction(s) recommended by the COI;

(2) involuntarily locate, expel or suspend the Respondent or withdraw the credentials of the Respondent (or impose a combination of such penalties), as the case may be, from such date as it may think fit; or

(3) where it is of the opinion that some punishment other than those mentioned in ¶752.2c)(2) should be imposed:

i) impose some lesser penalty on the Respondent as it thinks fit; or

ii) require the Respondent to retire in the interest of the Church without further proceedings under this Section, with or without a reduction in retirement benefits (if any).

3. In the carrying out of its work, the Disciplinary Tribunal may appoint an advocate and solicitor to assist them, the costs of which shall be borne by the Respondent's Annual Conference.

¶753. *Appeals Against Decisions of the Disciplinary Tribunal.* *Adopted 2012*

1. Any decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal shall be final in relation to and binding on the Respondent's Annual Conference and shall not be appealable at the instance of that Annual Conference.

2. The Respondent shall have the right to appeal against any decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal.

3. A Respondent desiring to appeal any decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal shall, within one month of receipt of the report of the Disciplinary Tribunal, notify in writing to the Council of Presidents and shall set out in this notice, the matter(s) appealed against, the ground(s) of such appeal and all relevant matters relied on in support of the appeal.

¶754. *Proceedings of the Judicial Council on Appeals from the Disciplinary Tribunal.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The president of the Respondent's Annual Conference or, where the president is conflicted or otherwise unable to act, the Council of Presidents shall, upon receipt of the Respondent's notice of appeal, submit the Respondent's notice and all reports and records of proceedings of the COI and the Disciplinary Tribunal to the Judicial Council.

2. The Judicial Council shall give the Respondent a reasonable opportunity to be heard and may in its absolute discretion, afford such opportunity to be heard either orally or through written submissions.

3. The Judicial Council shall not be required to hear witnesses.

4. The Judicial Council may permit the Respondent to be represented by a minister or an advocate and solicitor.

5. The Judicial Council may permit the Disciplinary Tribunal to be represented by an elder or an advocate and solicitor.

6. The Judicial Council shall consider the records of proceedings and reports of the COI, the Disciplinary Tribunal and all other information received in the disciplinary proceedings and shall notify its decision on the appeal to the Secretary of the Respondent's Annual Conference, the chairperson of the Board of Ministry of the Respondent's Annual Conference, the Disciplinary Tribunal, the Respondent and the Council of Presidents.

¶755. *Findings of the Judicial Council.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The Judicial Council:

a) where it disagrees with the Disciplinary Tribunal and is of the opinion that no misconduct has been proven, shall dismiss the matter;

b) where it agrees with the Disciplinary Tribunal that misconduct is proven and the disciplinary sanction(s) imposed by the Disciplinary Tribunal, shall confirm the decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal; or

c) where it agrees with the Disciplinary Tribunal that misconduct is proven but disagrees with the disciplinary sanction(s) imposed by the Disciplinary Tribunal, shall determine the appropriate disciplinary sanction(s) to be imposed and in the exercise of its powers hereunder:

(1) may vary any disciplinary sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Tribunal, provided always that the Judicial Council shall not enhance any disciplinary sanction(s) imposed by the Disciplinary Tribunal;

(2) involuntarily locate, expel or suspend the Respondent or withdraw the credentials of the Respondent (or impose a combination of such penalties), as the case may be, from such date as it may think fit; or

(3) where it is of the opinion that some punishment other than those mentioned in sub-paragraph (2) should be imposed

i) impose some lesser penalty on the Respondent as it thinks fit; or

ii) require the Respondent to retire in the interest of the Church without further proceedings under this Section, with or without a reduction in retirement benefits.

2. In the carrying out of its work under ¶754, the Judicial Council may, in its absolute discretion, obtain the assistance of an advocate and solicitor, and the costs shall be borne by the Respondent's Annual Conference.

3. Any decision of the Judicial Council under ¶755 is final in relation to and binding on all parties.

4. All decisions of the Judicial Council under ¶755 shall be published in accordance with ¶713.

¶756. *Witnesses.*

Adopted 2012 (cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶716.1g))

1. Notice to appear shall be given to such witnesses as the

Respondent or the elder and/or the advocate and solicitor referred to in ¶748.12 or ¶751.10 (as the case may be) may name and shall be issued in the name of the Church and be signed by the chairperson of the COI, the Disciplinary Tribunal or the Judicial Council, as the case may be.

2. It shall be the duty of all ministers and lay members of The Methodist Church in Singapore to appear and testify when summoned. *ed. 2020*

3. Refusal to appear or to answer questions ruled by the chairperson of the COI, the Disciplinary Tribunal or the Judicial Council, as the case may be, to be relevant may be considered as disobedience to the Order and Discipline of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

¶757. *Suspension.*

1. If the president of an Annual Conference considers that the interests of the Church requires that a minister of that Annual Conference who has been charged in court for, or convicted of, a criminal offence should cease to exercise the functions of ministerial office, the president may suspend such minister from the exercise of the functions of ministerial office (but not the right to draw any salary or benefits). *Adopted 2012*

2. If the criminal proceedings against the minister of the Annual Conference do not result in conviction, any suspension from the functions of ministerial office under ¶757.1 shall automatically cease with immediate effect.

¶758. *Stay of Disciplinary Proceedings in Respect of Serving Bishop or President.* If any representation of misconduct is made against a minister who is currently serving as a bishop or a president, no proceedings under this Section shall be taken until the minister has ceased to serve as a bishop or a president. *Adopted 2012*

¶759. *Criminal Proceedings.* If criminal proceedings are instituted against a minister of the Annual Conference, proceedings under this Section upon any grounds involved in the criminal charge shall not be taken (or, if already commenced, shall be stayed) until; *Adopted 2012*

1. the criminal proceedings have been determined; or

2. if there is an appeal against conviction, the appeal has been withdrawn or deemed to have been withdrawn or disposed of by the appellate court.

¶760. *Proceedings after Conviction of a Criminal Charge.* *Adopted 2012*
Where a minister of the Annual Conference is convicted of a criminal charge involving dishonesty or moral turpitude, the president of that minister's Annual Conference shall, within 28 working days of the conviction, convene a Disciplinary Tribunal under ¶750.

¶761. *Limitation Period.* No charge shall be entertained for any misconduct allegedly committed by a minister of the Annual Conference more than six years immediately preceding the filing of complaint, except where there is a conviction in a civil or criminal court, and in such cases the charges shall not be entertained unless they are filed within one year after the entry of the final judgment in such court. *Adopted 2012*

¶761A. *Miscellaneous Provisions.* *Adopted 2012*
(cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶718)

1. When a Respondent desires to withdraw from the Respondent's Annual Conference, the Respondent's Annual Conference (in the case of a minister), or the District Conference (or, where there is no District Conference, the Local Conference) in the case of a supply pastor or diaconal minister, may permit withdrawal, in which case, the record shall be "withdrawn under complaint". If formal charges have been presented, such Respondent may be permitted to withdraw, in which case the record shall be "Withdrawn under charges", and that person's status shall be the same as if the person was expelled.

2. The proceedings listed under this Section shall cease upon the Respondent ceasing, for any reason, to be a minister.

Section IV. Disciplinary Proceedings for Lay Members

(cf. 2009 Rev. Ed. ¶¶712–717) ed. 2016

¶762. *Definitions.* In this Section, unless the context otherwise requires: *Adopted 2012*

"day" means calendar day;

"Disciplinary Panel" means a Disciplinary Panel constituted under ¶767.4;

"Disciplinary Tribunal" means a Disciplinary Tribunal constituted under ¶767.3;

"Inquiry Committee" means an Inquiry Committee constituted under ¶764.2;

"lay member" means a person who is a member on the membership roll of a local church of an Annual Conference and who is not a minister;

"minister" means an elder, deacon, minister on trial, supply pastor, diaconal minister or retired minister of an Annual Conference;

"misconduct" means:

a) immorality, crime or other unchristian conduct;

b) habitual neglect of duty as a member or officer of the church;

c) disobedience to the Order and Discipline of The Methodist Church in Singapore; or *ed. 2020*

d) disseminating doctrines contrary to the Articles of Religion or other established standards of doctrine of the Church;

"month" means calendar month;

"Respondent" means the lay member who is the subject of the proceedings under this Section.

¶763. *Fair Process and Right to Trial.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The following procedures are established for the protection of the Church and individuals and to guarantee all lay members of the church the right to trial and of appeal.

2. At each step in the proceedings listed under this Section, efforts for reconciliation shall continue, so long as these efforts are not used to hinder fair process.

3. The presumption of innocence shall be maintained until the conclusion of the disciplinary process.

¶764. *Inquiry Committee.* *Adopted 2012*

1. If it is represented to the pastor-in-charge of a local church *ed. 2017*

of an Annual Conference or to the district superintendent of that local church by any person that a lay member of that local church has been guilty of misconduct, the pastor-in-charge and the district superintendent shall consider whether it is appropriate and in the *ed. 2017* interests of the church that proceedings under this Section be commenced. If both the pastor-in-charge and the district superintendent (or, if either or both of them are conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, any two elders as nominated by the Board of Ministry of that Annual Conference) *ed. 2017* consider that such proceedings should be commenced, they shall so notify the chairperson of the Board of Laity of the Respondent's Annual Conference with a statement of the misconduct alleged and the chairperson (or, where that chairperson is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, a nominee of the Board of Nominations of that Annual Conference) shall, within 21 days of receiving the representation, convene an Inquiry Committee and forthwith refer the matter to that Inquiry Committee for inquiry.

2. The Inquiry Committee shall consist of the following members:

a) a non-voting chairperson who shall be an elder who is a member of the Disciplinary Panel for ministers (¶750.3) of the Respondent's Annual Conference chosen by the chairperson of the Board of Ministry of that Annual Conference (or, where the chairperson is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, a nominee of the two chairpersons of the Boards of Ministry of the other two Annual Conferences);

b) the chairperson of the Board of Laity of the Respondent's Annual Conference or a member of that Board of Laity nominated by the chairperson of the Board (or, where the chairperson is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, a nominee of the Board of Nominations of that Annual Conference);

c) one member of that Board of Laity chosen by the Board of Nominations of that Annual Conference; and

d) one member of the Disciplinary Panel of the Respondent's Annual Conference chosen by the chairperson of the Board of Laity

of that Annual Conference (or, where the chairperson is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, a nominee of the Board of Nominations of that Annual Conference).

3. Where the person mentioned in ¶¶764.2a), 764.2b), 764.2c) or 764.2d):

a) is the Respondent or is unable to be a member of the Inquiry Committee for any reasonable cause; or

b) is otherwise unable to remain as a member of the Inquiry Committee for any reasonable cause,

the person(s) responsible for appointing a replacement shall (if satisfied that such reasonable cause exists), replace such person as mentioned in ¶764.2a), b), c) or d) with another person who shall be chosen in accordance with the appropriate sub-paragraph of ¶764.2.

4. A member of an Inquiry Committee shall, notwithstanding having ceased to be a member of the Board of Laity or Disciplinary Panel, as the case may be, on the expiry of such person's term of office or having ceased to hold any office in the local church referred to in ¶767.4, be deemed to be a member of the Board of Laity or Disciplinary Panel, as the case may be, until such time as the Board of Laity has decided that the Inquiry Committee of which such person is a member has completed its work.

5. In the carrying out of its work, the Inquiry Committee may, with the concurrence of the Council of Presidents, appoint an advocate and solicitor to assist the Inquiry Committee, the costs of which shall be borne by the Respondent's Annual Conference.

¶765. *Proceedings of Inquiry Committee.* *Adopted 2012*

1. An Inquiry Committee may meet for the purposes of business and regulate its business as the chairperson of the Inquiry Committee thinks fit.

2. The chairperson of an Inquiry Committee or a majority of its voting members may at any time summon a meeting of the Inquiry Committee.

3. Subject to ¶765.4, any question arising at any meeting of an Inquiry Committee shall be determined by a majority of votes of its members present and voting.

4. The chairperson of an Inquiry Committee shall have no voting right.

5. The chairperson and two-thirds of the voting members of an Inquiry Committee shall be present to constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Inquiry Committee.

6. The Inquiry Committee shall inform the Respondent in writing of the complaint made against the Respondent and shall give the Respondent a reasonable opportunity of replying thereto before completing its review.

7. The Inquiry Committee may permit the Respondent to be represented by a lay person or an advocate and solicitor or both, chosen by the Respondent.

¶766. *Findings of Inquiry Committee*.

1. The Inquiry Committee shall complete its inquiry within 42 days of its constitution (or such longer period as the president of the Annual Conference of the Respondent may allow), and: *Adopted 2012*

a) shall dismiss the matter if it is of the opinion that the complaint is frivolous, vexatious, misconceived or lacking in substance, and give reasons for the dismissal;

b) where the Inquiry Committee is of the opinion that the subject of the complaint is not serious enough to warrant proceedings under ¶¶767–769 with a view to termination of church membership or suspension from exercise of any office held in the Respondent's local church, the Inquiry Committee shall state the grounds for its opinion and may cause an investigation to be made into the matter in such manner as it thinks fit and shall refer the matter to the Board of Laity for such action as the Board may think fit; or *ed. 2016*

c) where the Inquiry Committee is of the opinion that the subject of the complaint warrants proceedings with a view to termination of church membership or suspension from exercise of any office held in the Respondent's local church, the Inquiry Committee shall cause proceedings to be taken under ¶¶767–769.

2. Where the Inquiry Committee proceeds under ¶¶766.1a) or 766.1b), it shall within the time frame stipulated in ¶766.1 deliver a report of its inquiry to the pastor-in-charge and the district *ed. 2017*

superintendent of the Respondent's local church, the Board of Laity and the Respondent.

3. Where the Inquiry Committee proceeds under ¶766.1c), it shall prepare a report of its inquiry, state the grounds for its opinion and specify charge(s) setting out the ground(s) on which proceedings are to be brought, and the chairperson of the Inquiry Committee shall deliver a copy of the report and the charge(s) to the Respondent, the Board of Laity and the president of the Respondent's Annual Conference.

4. Where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, any powers exercisable by the president shall be exercised instead by the Council of Presidents and the report and charge(s) to be delivered to the president shall be delivered instead to the Council of Presidents.

5. Before the Board of Laity takes any action pursuant to ¶766.1b), the Respondent shall be given an opportunity to be heard.

¶767. *Disciplinary Tribunal.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The president of the Respondent's Annual Conference or, where the president is conflicted from involvement, a nominee of that Annual Conference's Board of Nominations (as the case may be) shall, within 21 days of receipt of the report and charge(s) from the Inquiry Committee delivered pursuant to ¶766.3, cause a Disciplinary Tribunal to be convened in accordance with ¶767.3.

2. The Respondent shall have 42 days from receipt of the report and charges from the Inquiry Committee to respond in writing to the Disciplinary Tribunal on the charge(s) and the Disciplinary Tribunal shall inform the Respondent of the date that it shall commence its investigation.

3. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall consist of:

a) a chairperson who shall be an elder chosen by the Board of Ministry of the Respondent's Annual Conference;

b) four members chosen from the Disciplinary Panel of the Respondent's Annual Conference by the Board of Laity of the Respondent's Annual Conference; and

c) one member from the Disciplinary Panel of the

Respondent's Annual Conference, chosen by the Respondent or if he fails to so choose 14 days after being notified to do so, chosen by the Board of Laity of the Respondent's Annual Conference.

4. The Disciplinary Panel of each Annual Conference shall consist of the chairpersons and vice-chairpersons of the Local Church Executive Committees, the lay leaders, the associate lay leaders (if any) and the chairpersons of the Pastor-Parish Relations and Staff Committees of all the local churches within the Annual Conference.

5. Any present or past member of an Inquiry Committee who has been a party to any prior proceedings in a case which comes before the Disciplinary Tribunal shall be disqualified from sitting on that Disciplinary Tribunal.

6. Where the person mentioned in ¶¶767.3a), 767.3b) or 767.3c)

a) is unable to be a member of the Disciplinary Tribunal for any reasonable cause; or

b) is otherwise unable to remain as a member of the Disciplinary Tribunal for any reasonable cause,

the person(s) responsible for appointing a replacement shall (if satisfied that such reasonable cause exists), replace that person as mentioned in ¶¶767.3a), 767.3b) or 767.3c) with another person who shall be chosen in accordance with the appropriate sub-paragraph of ¶767.3.

7. A member of a Disciplinary Tribunal shall, notwithstanding having ceased to hold the office in the local church referred to in ¶767.4, be deemed to be a member of the Disciplinary Panel until such time as the Board of Laity has decided that the Disciplinary Tribunal of which such person is a member has completed its work.

¶768. *Proceedings of Disciplinary Tribunal.* *Adopted 2012*

1. A Disciplinary Tribunal may meet for the purposes of business and regulate its business as the chairperson of the Disciplinary Tribunal thinks fit.

2. The chairperson of a Disciplinary Tribunal or any three of its members may at any time summon a meeting of the Disciplinary

Tribunal.

3. Subject to ¶768.4 any question arising at any meeting of a Disciplinary Tribunal shall be determined by a majority of votes of its members present and voting.

4. The chairperson of a Disciplinary Tribunal shall have no voting right.

5. The authority of the chairperson of a Disciplinary Tribunal shall be limited to apprising the members of the Disciplinary Tribunal as to the Church law involved in the case, but the chairperson shall not have authority to pronounce any judgment in favour of or against the Respondent.

6. The chairperson and at least three of the other members of the Disciplinary Tribunal shall be present to constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Disciplinary Tribunal.

7. The Respondent shall be permitted to attend the investigation proceedings and:

a) to cross-examine the witnesses;

b) to give evidence on the Respondent's own behalf;

c) to have such witnesses as the Respondent may wish called on the Respondent's own behalf; and

d) to have access to any documents intended to be tendered in evidence.

8. Where the Disciplinary Tribunal proposes to take into consideration any other circumstance apart from the report of the Inquiry Committee or matters arising during the investigation proceedings, it shall as soon as practicable inform the Respondent of such circumstance and allow the Respondent a reasonable opportunity to respond thereto.

9. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall give the Respondent a reasonable opportunity to be heard and may, in its absolute discretion, afford such opportunity to be heard either orally or through written submissions.

10. If the Respondent fails to respond or attend at any stage before the Disciplinary Tribunal, the Disciplinary Tribunal shall be entitled to proceed notwithstanding such failure or absence.

11. A Disciplinary Tribunal may permit the Respondent to be represented by a lay person or an advocate and solicitor or both, chosen by the Respondent.

12. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall keep a record of its proceedings and shall attach the record to its report. The Disciplinary Tribunal may maintain a verbatim transcript of witnesses' testimony to be included in the record of proceedings.

13. At the proceedings, the evidence forming the basis of the charge(s) shall be presented by: a) a minister or lay member; or b) by an advocate and solicitor; or c) both, appointed by the president on behalf of the Respondent's Annual Conference (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, by the Council of Presidents).

14. The Disciplinary Tribunal may, at any time, exclude any person representing the Respondent from the proceedings if the Disciplinary Tribunal is of the view that the person has behaved improperly in the course of the proceedings or attempted to delay the proceedings.

15. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall not be bound to act in a formal manner and shall not be bound by the Evidence Act or by any other law relating to evidence but may inform itself on any matter in such manner as it thinks fit.

16. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall proceed without unreasonable delay and from day to day; no adjournment shall be given except for reasons to be recorded in writing.

17. Every adjournment, with reasons therefore, shall be reported immediately to the president (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, to the Council of Presidents).

18. No adjournment shall be given for more than 14 days except with the permission of the president (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, of the Council of Presidents).

19. The Disciplinary Tribunal may, in its discretion, conduct its proceedings notwithstanding the absence of one of its members,

and the validity of such proceedings shall not be challenged on this ground.

20. If the Disciplinary Tribunal is satisfied that the Respondent or any person representing the Respondent is hampering or attempting to hamper the progress of its work, the Disciplinary Tribunal shall administer a warning to the Respondent and, where appropriate, the person representing the Respondent; and if after such warning the Disciplinary Tribunal is satisfied that the warning is being disregarded, the Disciplinary Tribunal shall make a written note of this and shall proceed to complete its work in such manner as it thinks fit.

21. In the carrying out of its work, the Disciplinary Tribunal may, with the concurrence of the Council of Presidents, appoint an advocate and solicitor to assist the Disciplinary Tribunal, the costs of which shall be borne by the Respondent's Annual Conference.

22. The Disciplinary Tribunal may amend the charges at its discretion provided that they do not change the nature of the charges and specifications and do not introduce new matters of which the Respondent has not had due notice and a reasonable opportunity to respond.

¶769. *Findings of Disciplinary Tribunal.*

1. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall determine whether the charge(s) are supported by the facts and: *Adopted 2012*

a) where it is of the opinion that the no misconduct has been proven, shall dismiss the matter and give reasons for the dismissal; or

b) where it is of the opinion that the charge(s) are proven and that disciplinary sanction(s) are appropriate, shall state the grounds for its opinion and determine the appropriate disciplinary sanction(s) to be imposed; and for this purpose, the Disciplinary Tribunal may:

(1) direct that such steps be taken as may be appropriate to fulfil the objectives of ¶114;

(2) require the Respondent to withdraw from membership in the Respondent's local church; or

(3) terminate the church membership of the Respondent or suspend the Respondent from the exercise of any office held in the Respondent's local church (or impose a combination of such sanctions), as the case may be, from such date as it may think fit.

2. The Disciplinary Tribunal shall set out its determinations made pursuant to ¶769.1 above and the grounds of determination in a report, and shall within four months of its constitution unless the president (or, where the president of the Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement or otherwise unable to act, the Council of Presidents) grants an extension of time, deliver the report together with the record of proceedings and/or other information received in the disciplinary proceedings to the pastor-in-charge and the district superintendent of the Respondent's local church, the secretary of the Respondent's Local Conference, the president of the Respondent's Annual Conference and the Respondent. *ed. 2017*

3. Where the president of the Respondent's Annual Conference is conflicted from involvement, the report intended for the president shall be delivered instead to the Council of Presidents.

¶770. *Appeals Against Decisions of the Disciplinary Tribunal.* *Adopted 2012*

1. Any decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal shall be final in relation to and binding on the Respondent's Annual Conference and shall not be appealable at the instance of that Annual Conference.

2. The Respondent shall have the right to appeal against any decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal.

3. A Respondent desiring to appeal any decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal shall, within one month of receipt of the report of the Disciplinary Tribunal, notify in writing to the Council of Presidents and shall set out in this notice, the matter(s) appealed against, the ground(s) of such appeal and all relevant matters relied on in support of the appeal.

¶771. *Proceedings of the Judicial Council on Appeals from the Disciplinary Tribunal.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The president of the Respondent's Annual Conference or, where the president is conflicted or otherwise unable to act, the Council of Presidents shall, upon receipt of the Respondent's notice

of appeal, submit the Respondent's notice and all reports and records of proceedings of the Disciplinary Tribunal to the Judicial Council.

2. The Judicial Council shall give the Respondent a reasonable opportunity to be heard and may in its absolute discretion, afford such opportunity to be heard either orally or through written submissions.

3. The Judicial Council shall not be required to hear witnesses.

4. The Judicial Council may permit the Respondent to be represented by a minister or an advocate and solicitor.

5. The Judicial Council may permit the Disciplinary Tribunal to be represented by an elder or an advocate and solicitor.

6. The Judicial Council shall consider the records of proceedings and reports of the Disciplinary Tribunal and all other information received in the disciplinary proceedings and shall notify its decision on the appeal to the pastor-in-charge and the district superintendent of the Respondent's local church, the secretary of the Respondent's Local Conference, the Council of Presidents, the General Conference Secretary and the Respondent. *ed. 2017*

¶772. *Findings of the Judicial Council.* *Adopted 2012*

1. The Judicial Council:

a) where it disagrees with the Disciplinary Tribunal and is of the opinion that no misconduct has been proven, shall dismiss the matter;

b) where it agrees with the Disciplinary Tribunal that misconduct is proven and the sanctions imposed by the Disciplinary Tribunal, shall confirm the decision of the Disciplinary Tribunal; or

c) where it agrees with the Disciplinary Tribunal that misconduct is proven but disagrees with the disciplinary sanctions imposed by the Disciplinary Tribunal, shall determine the appropriate disciplinary sanctions to be imposed and in the exercise of its powers hereunder:

(1) may vary any disciplinary sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Tribunal, provided always that the Judicial Council shall not enhance any disciplinary sanction(s) imposed by the Disciplinary Tribunal;

(2) direct that such steps be taken as may be appropriate to fulfil the objectives of ¶114;

(3) require the Respondent to withdraw from membership in the Respondent's local church; or

(4) terminate the church membership of the Respondent or suspend the Respondent from the exercise of any office held in the Respondent's local church (or impose a combination of such sanctions), as the case may be, from such date as it may think fit.

2. In the carrying out of its work, the Judicial Council may, in its absolute discretion, obtain the assistance of an advocate and solicitor, and the costs shall be borne by the Respondent's Annual Conference.

3. Any decision of the Judicial Council under ¶772 is final in relation to and binding on all parties.

4. All decisions of the Judicial Council under ¶772 shall be published in accordance with ¶713 but without naming or otherwise stating the identity of the Respondent.

¶773. *Witnesses.* *Adopted 2012*

1. Notice to appear shall be given to such witnesses as either party may name and shall be issued in the name of the Church and be signed by the chairperson of the Disciplinary Tribunal or the Judicial Council, as the case may be.

2. It shall be the duty of all ministers and lay members of The Methodist Church in Singapore to appear and testify when summoned. *ed. 2020*

3. Refusal to appear or to answer questions ruled by the chairperson of the Disciplinary Tribunal or the Judicial Council, as the case may be, to be relevant may be considered as disobedience to the Order and Discipline of The Methodist Church in Singapore. *ed. 2020*

¶774. *Limitation Period.* *Adopted 2012*

1. No charge shall be entertained for any misconduct allegedly committed by a lay member of a local church more than six years immediately preceding the filing of complaint, except where there is a conviction in a civil or criminal court, and in such cases the charges shall not be entertained unless they are filed within one year *ed. 2020*

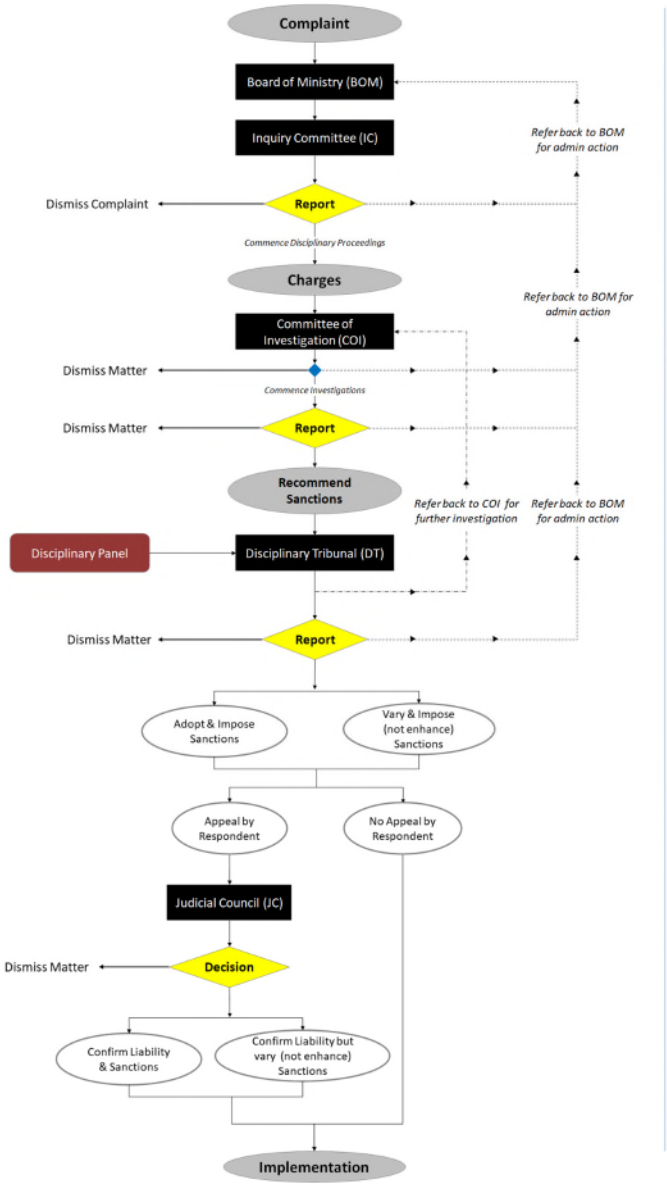
after the entry of the final judgment in such court.

¶775. *Miscellaneous Provisions.*

1. When a Respondent desires to withdraw from membership of the Respondent's Local Church, the Local Church may permit such lay member to withdraw, in which case, the record shall be "Withdrawn under complaint". If formal charges have been presented, such Respondent may be permitted to withdraw, in which case the record shall be "Withdrawn under charges". *Adopted 2012*

2. The proceedings listed under this Section shall cease upon the Respondent ceasing, for any reason, to be a lay member.

FLOWCHART FOR MINISTERIAL DISCIPLINARY PROCESS



¶744.1

IC Composition: ¶744.2

¶746.1 – 3

¶746.3

COI Composition: ¶747.3

¶747.8

¶749.1, ¶748.22

¶749.1c)

DP Composition: ¶750.3
DT Composition: ¶750.2

¶752.2

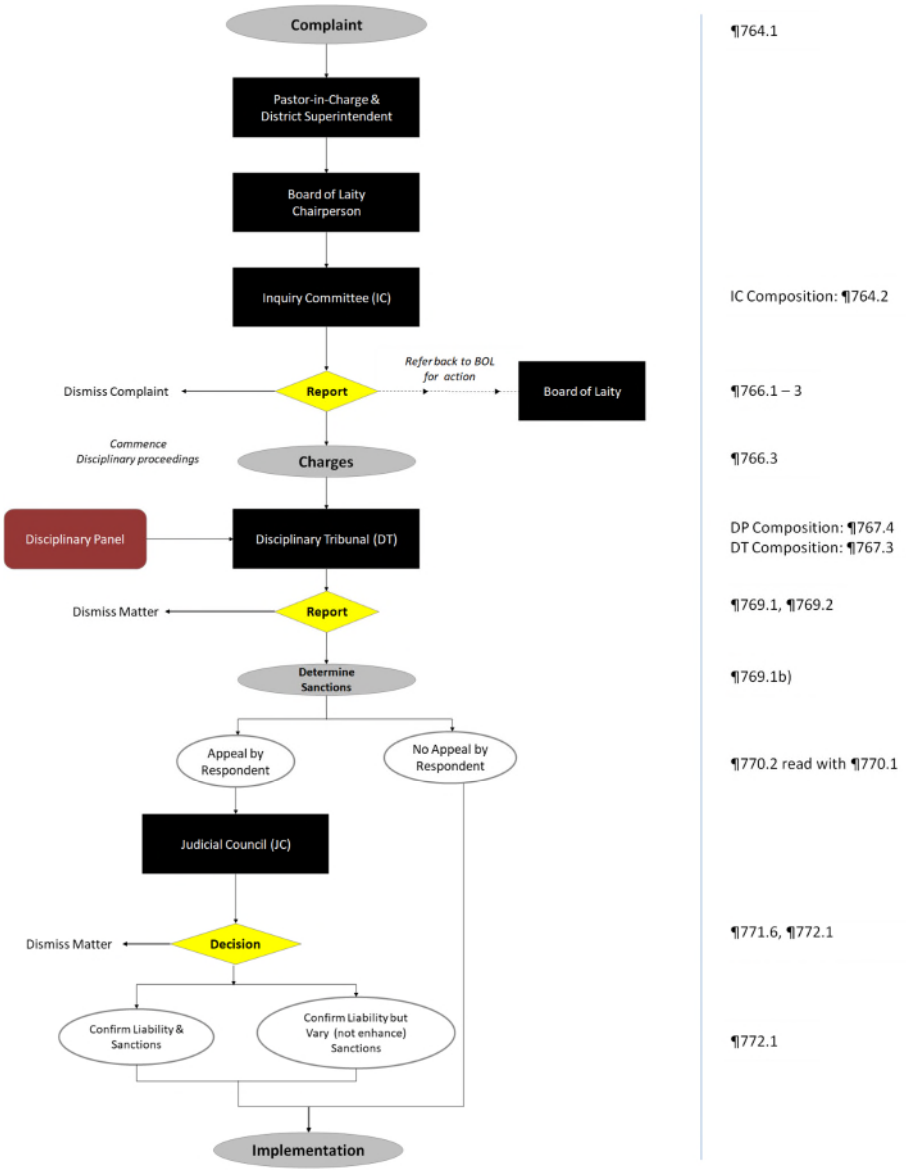
¶752.2c)

¶753.2 read with ¶753.1

¶754.6, ¶755.1

¶755.1

FLOWCHART FOR LAY MEMBERS DISCIPLINARY PROCESS



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Part V

THE CONSTITUTION AND BYE-LAWS OF METHODIST ORGANISATIONS

Chapter One

CONSTITUTION AND BYE-LAWS OF THE WOMEN'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

¶¶801 – 806

Prepared by the Women's Society of Christian Service of
The Methodist Church in Singapore.

Part V

THE CONSTITUTION AND BYE-LAWS OF METHODIST ORGANISATIONS

Chapter One

¶801. CONSTITUTION OF THE WOMEN'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

GENERAL CONFERENCE LEVEL

1. ***Name.*** The name of this organisation shall be the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore. It shall comprise the Women's Society of Christian Service of each Local Church of the Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

2. ***Purpose*.**

2.1 To help women grow in the knowledge and experience of God as revealed in Jesus Christ;

2.2 To challenge them to respond to God's redemptive fellowship;

2.3 To make Christ known throughout the world;

2.4 To develop a personal responsibility for the whole task of the Church.

3. ***Function.***

3.1. To guide and coordinate the work of each Conference Women's Society of Christian Service towards the realisation of the purpose of the Women's Society of Christian Service;

3.2. To promote its work with such plans and policies as shall make the work of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service effective;

3.3. To join hands with the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women "To Know Christ and To Make Him Known";

3.4. To cooperate with other Christian Women's groups in fellowship.

4. ***Authority.*** The General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall have authority to promote its work in accordance with the programme and policy of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

5. **Membership.** Any woman who is a member of The Methodist Church in Singapore and is a member of the Women's Society of Christian Service in her local Church shall be a member of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

6. ***Meetings.***

6.1 There shall be a Quadrennial General Meeting which shall:

(1) transact business and elect

a) the Officers,

b) the Coordinators of Programme,

c) the Chairpersons of the following Committees

i) Finance,

ii) Property Management,

iii) Governance,

iv) Constitution Review,

d) the members of the following Committees

i) Nominations,

ii) Governance, and

e) the Advisers;

(2) receive reports from Officers, Coordinators of Programme and Chairpersons of Committees;

(3) transact such other business as it may deem necessary.

6.2 Only Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Chairpersons of Committees, the President of each Conference Women's Society of Christian Service or her representative who is a member of the Executive Committee of the Conference

Women's Society of Christian Service, and the elected delegates from each Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, the number of which shall be fixed by the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, shall be eligible to vote at the General Meeting.

6.3 Notice of the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be given at least one month in advance.

6.4 The President, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may call an Extraordinary General Meeting provided 14 days' notice is given in advance.

7. ***Funds.*** All funds secured by the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service belong to this organisation and shall be disbursed by its order and in accordance with the financial procedures of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

8. ***Amendments.***

8.1 Proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service at least two months before any General Meeting in which the amendments are proposed to be voted on.

8.2 Amendments to the Constitution shall be made at a General Meeting at which a quorum is present and such amendments shall require a two-thirds majority of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service delegates present and voting. The amendment voted upon shall become effective after the announcement of its having received the required majority and adoption by action of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

9. ***General Conference Relations.*** The President of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be a member of the General Conference Executive Council of The Methodist Church in Singapore with voting rights. In her absence her representative who is a member of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee shall take her place.

10. ***Quorum.*** A majority of voting members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; but a smaller number may take a recess and adjourn for half an hour, after which time the meeting shall be reconvened and proceed with the

business meeting, provided decisions taken at the meeting are ratified at the next meeting. An adjourned General Meeting shall not adopt any amendment to the Constitution.

¶801A. COVID-19 TEMPORARY MEASURES FOR CONDUCT OF CERTAIN MEETINGS

1. ***Applicability*.**

Up till 31 August 2021 or for as long as Part 4 of the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act 2020 shall continue in force (whichever occurs the later), the following arrangements shall apply to the meeting(s) of the Executive Committee, Quadrennial General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting(s) of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore ("GC-WSCS") despite anything to the contrary in The Book of Discipline, the Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore (General Conference Level) (¶801) and/or the Bye-Laws (¶802).

2. ***Interpretation*.**

In this ¶801A:

"electronic means" shall mean electronic communication, video conferencing, tele-conferencing or any other electronic means.

"governing body" shall mean the Executive Committee of the GC-WSCS.

"person(s) eligible to vote" shall mean the person(s) identified as being eligible to vote in ¶801, Sub-section 6.2.

3. Under these arrangements, the meeting(s) of the Executive Committee, Quadrennial General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting(s) of the GC-WSCS may be convened, held and/or conducted at the same time or times—

a) at one or more than one places; and/or

b) wholly or partly by electronic means;

but provided always that every person(s) eligible to vote or other person entitled to attend and speak at such a meeting is, if such person so desires, allowed reasonable opportunity to participate in the proceedings by electronic means from such place or places as shall be specified for the purpose in contemporaneous communication with one another.

4. By an absolute majority of its voting membership evidenced by affirmative vote in support of one or more resolutions (including circular resolution(s) done by regular mail or e-mail), the governing body may, from time to time, specify any arrangements for convening, holding and/or conducting the meeting(s) of the Executive Committee, Quadrennial General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting(s) of the GC-WSCS including:

a) the period of notice for such meetings, which shall not be less than 7 days;
b) the place and/or places where such meetings shall be convened to meet and where each of the person(s) eligible to vote or other persons entitled to attend shall assemble, if meeting physically (wholly or partly) shall be permitted by the governing body;
c) the electronic platform(s) at which such meetings may be located in respect of all and/or each of the person(s) eligible to vote or other persons entitled to attend, if meeting by electronic means (wholly or partly) shall be permitted by the governing body;
d) how a quorum may be formed (wholly or partly) by physical presence and/or by electronic means;
e) the methods and processes by which participation in the proceedings of the meetings (wholly or partly) by physical presence and/or by electronic means may be provided, including prior registration requirements;
f) how voting by electronic means may be conducted;
g) how voting by proxy may be conducted, including as to who may be appointed as the proxy;
h) how questions may be tabled for discussion in writing and/or by electronic means;
i) how responses to questions tabled for discussion may be communicated in writing and/or by electronic means;

j) how notices for a meeting, proxies, and/or circulars and other documents relating to the meeting may be given by electronic means;
k) how notices for a meeting to supersede any previous notice may be given;
l) how a meeting may be deferred; and
m) all other matters as the governing body considers necessary or expedient for the smooth and effective holding of the meetings.

5. A meeting convened, held, conducted or deferred substantially in accordance with the arrangements specified by the governing body under ¶801A.4 is deemed to satisfy the requirements relating to the convening, holding, conduct or deferral of the relevant meeting under The Book of Discipline, the Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore (General Conference Level) (¶801) and/or the Bye-Laws (¶802) despite anything to the contrary therein and notwithstanding any intermittent failure in electronic means to facilitate contemporaneous communication.

6. Any notice, form, circular or other document given or sent in accordance with the arrangements specified by the governing body under ¶801A.4 is deemed to satisfy the requirements relating to the same under The Book of Discipline, the Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore (General Conference Level) (¶801) and/or the Bye-Laws (¶802) despite anything to the contrary therein and notwithstanding any inadvertent failure in giving or sending any such notice, form, circular or other document to any person(s).

7. This ¶801A shall take effect after:

a) its enactment has received the support of a two-thirds majority at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the GC-WSCS convened to enact this provision under the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings of Charities, Co-operative Societies and Mutual Benefit Organisations) Order S327 ("the COVID-19 Order") where the quorum is formed and the voting is conducted by proxy in the manner permitted under the provisions of the COVID-19 Order; and

b) the announcement of its having received the required majority and adoption by action of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

¶802. BYE-LAWS OF THE WOMEN'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

GENERAL CONFERENCE LEVEL

The General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore is a connectional structure maintained through its chain of Conferences and Local Women's Societies of Christian Service within The Methodist Church in Singapore.

1. ***Organisation.*** The General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall comprise the Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Chairpersons of Committees and Advisers.

1.1 ***Officers.*** The Officers shall be
a) the President,
b) the Vice-President(s),
c) the Secretary(ies) and
d) the Treasurer(s).

1.2 ***Coordinators of Programme.*** The Coordinators of Programme shall be
a) the Coordinator of Witness & Evangelism,
b) the Coordinator of Outreach & Social Concerns,
c) the Coordinator of Discipleship & Nurture and
d) the Coordinator of Missions.

1.3 ***Committees.*** There shall be the following Committees:
(1) **The Executive Committee** shall comprise
a) the Officers,
b) the Coordinators of Programme,
c) the Chairpersons of Committees,

d) the President of each Conference Women's Society of Christian Service. In her absence her representative who is a member of the Executive Committee of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall take her place with the same rights and privileges,

e) the Advisers, one of whom shall be the immediate past President of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service. The Advisers shall be seated without the right to vote. The Advisers are not eligible to be elected as delegates of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service to the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service. The immediate past President shall hold office as an Adviser for one term, however she is eligible to be elected as an Adviser for a second term, and

f) the Ex-officio members, who shall be the Bishop of The Methodist Church in Singapore and spouse. The Ex-officio members shall be seated without the right to vote.

Except for the Nominations Committee and the Chairpersons of Committees elected at the Quadrennial General Meeting, the Executive Committee shall appoint all other Chairpersons of Committees when required.

(2) **The Administrative Committee** shall comprise

a) the President,
b) the Vice-President(s),
c) the Secretary(ies) and
d) the Treasurer(s).

(3) **The Finance Committee** shall comprise

a) the Chairperson,
b) the Treasurer(s),
c) the President,
d) the Vice-President(s),
e) the Secretary(ies) and
f) the President of each Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

The Committee shall be responsible for the Budget.

a) ***Income***. The General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall receive from each Conference Women's Society of Christian Service:

i) an annual contribution, which shall be determined by the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

ii) special gifts from Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and individuals;

iii) contributions toward approved General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service projects;

iv) offerings.

b) ***Obligations.*** The General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall make an annual provision for:

i) affiliation dues to the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women;

ii) support of projects;

iii) subsidy as decided by the Executive Committee for elected delegates or representatives of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service attending approved Conferences or Seminars;

iv) programme materials;

v) contingency fund;

vi) support for General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

All funds belonging to the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be deposited in The Methodist Church in Singapore in the name of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

The accounts of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be audited annually. The audited accounts shall be presented for acceptance to a General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

(4) **The Programme Committee** shall comprise

a) the Vice-President as Chairperson,

b) the President,

c) the Secretary(ies),
d) the Treasurer(s) and
e) the Coordinators of Programme.

The Committee shall be responsible for planning and recommending to the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service such study and action programmes which will contribute to the fulfilment of the purpose and the programme as determined by the Quadrennial General Meeting.

(5) a) **The Nominations Committee** shall comprise three, five or seven members who shall be elected from the floor. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be elected by the members of the Committee. Members of the Committee may attend Executive Committee Meetings but with no voting rights. The members of the Committee are eligible to be elected as delegates of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service to the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

b) The Nominations Committee shall nominate the Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Advisers, Chairpersons of Committees and members of Governance Committee, except the Committee on Nominations, with the consent of nominees having been previously secured and additional nominations may be received from the floor.

Only women who are active members of the Women's Society of Christian Service are eligible to hold office.

(6) **The Property Management Committee**

a) The members of this Committee shall comprise
   i) the Chairperson,
   ii) the Secretary(ies),
   iii) the Treasurer(s) and/or the Chairperson of Finance Committee.
b) A sub-committee may be appointed when needed.
c) The Committee shall be responsible for the management of all General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service properties.

(7) **The Governance Committee**

The Chairperson of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Governance Committee shall be an active Women's Society of Christian Service member not employed by the General Conference or any Conference or any Local Conference or their respective agencies and elected by the General Meeting. The Chairperson shall not serve in that position for more than two consecutive terms and shall not concurrently be the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Treasurer or the Chairperson of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Finance Committee.

1.1 The General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service General Meeting shall elect a Chairperson of the Governance Committee and not less than two and not more than six active members who shall be the other members of the Governance Committee. Members of the Committee may attend Executive Committee Meetings but with no voting rights. The members of the Committee are eligible to be elected as delegates of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service to the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

1.2 The terms of reference of the Governance Committee should be approved at the Quadrennial General Meeting, at the start of the term of the Governance Committee.

1.3 Unless otherwise resolved by the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service General Meeting, such terms of reference shall include:

a) Review the audit plans of the external auditors;

b) Review the external auditors' reports on the financial statements and their management letter on internal controls;

c) Review the cooperation given by staff to the external auditors;

d) Review, to the extent feasible, the adequacy of internal controls and the scope and results of the internal audit procedures (if any);

e) Nominate external auditors for appointment by the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service General Meeting;

f) Review compliance with such functions and duties as may be required under the relevant statutes or the Charities Act, and by such amendments made thereto from time to time;

g) Review interested person transactions and procedures on awarding contracts to interested parties, if any;

h) Review the remuneration packages of employees who are related to the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee members (if any);

i) Review the finance manual for adoption by the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service General Meeting and monitor compliance thereof;

j) Have authority to investigate matters in its terms of reference, and shall have access to and have the cooperation of employees and the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee. The Governance Committee shall have the discretion to invite General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee members or employees to attend its meetings, as well as to requisition reasonable resources to enable it to discharge its functions effectively;

k) Review the appropriateness of the financial reserves policy (if any).

(8) **The Constitution Review Committee**

a) The members of this Committee shall comprise

i) the Chairperson,

ii) two members from the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, and

iii) two members from each Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

b) The Committee shall review the Constitution and recommend any changes to be made from time to time to the Executive Committee of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service for concurrence and subsequently to its General Meeting for approval.

Guidelines for Election of Chairpersons of Committees:

Only women with a sufficient or adequate knowledge and experience in the general work of the Women's Society of Christian Service and The Methodist Church in Singapore as well as a deep awareness of the present-day challenges and commitment to respond to the purpose of the Women's Society of Christian Service of Singapore shall be elected.

2. Elections.

2.1 Elections shall be by acclamation or by ballot with a two-thirds majority of members present and voting for the election of the President, and simple majority for all other office-bearers.

2.2 Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Advisers, Chairpersons of Committees, members of Nominations Committee and Governance Committee shall be elected for a term of four years, and shall not hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms. The newly elected office-bearers shall take office at the close of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Quadrennial General Meeting.

2.3 The Presidents of Conference Women's Society of Christian Service who are Executive Committee members of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, with voting rights, shall not concurrently hold any elected or appointed office at General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service level. Any Women's Society of Christian Service member who is in the employment of the General Conference or Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore or is being financially supported by any of them shall not be eligible to hold the office of President of General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

2.4 One or more Vice-President(s), Secretary(ies), Treasurer(s) and Coordinators of Programme may be elected when required.

2.5 The office of the Treasurer shall be in compliance with the Charities Act of Singapore.

2.6 The Executive Committee of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be empowered to fill in the vacancies occurring during the term.

2.7 Delegates to national and international meetings shall be elected at the General Meeting or by the Executive Committee of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service in the interim period between General Meetings.

2.8 Delegates to the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be composed of the delegates who are elected at a General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service for a term of two years. At least thirty days prior to the beginning of the calendar year, the Secretary of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall notify the President and Secretary of each Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of the number of delegates to be elected by that Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3. ***Duties of Officers and Coordinators of Programme.***

3.1 **The President** shall:

(1) preside at the General, Executive and Administrative Meetings and shall, with the Secretary, draw up the Agenda;

(2) be responsible for the coordination of the work of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and promote its total programme;

(3) be an ex-officio member of all Committees except the Nominations Committee;

(4) be a member of the General Conference Executive Council of The Methodist Church in Singapore with voting rights;

(5) be a member of the General Conference Finance and Administration Council of The Methodist Church in Singapore with voice but without vote;

(6) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(7) present a report at the Quadrennial General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and at the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

3.2 **The Vice-President** shall:

(1) assume all duties of the President in her absence or at her request;

(2) serve as Chairperson of the Programme Committee;

(3) promote the work of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women in the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(4) be responsible for organising Leadership Development programme;

(5) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(6) present a report at the Quadrennial General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.3 **The Secretary** shall:

(1) give notice of the General Meeting and all Meetings of the Executive and Administrative Committees of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(2) keep an accurate record of all proceedings;

(3) present all recommendations at the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(4) notify all Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Chairpersons of Committees and Advisers of their appointment;

(5) notify the General Conference Secretary of The Methodist Church in Singapore of the newly-elected office-bearers;

(6) be responsible for all correspondence of the Executive and Administrative Committees.

3.4 **The Treasurer** shall:

(1) receive and remit monies for all budgeted items and all other items approved by the Executive Committee of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and shall keep a record of same;

(2) sign payment vouchers in accordance with the Finance Manual. The parties involved must not be related or members of the same church;

(3) present a Statement of Accounts at the Executive Committee Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(4) present an audited Statement of Accounts at a General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.5 **The Coordinator of Witness & Evangelism** shall:

(1) seek ways to help women understand the roles of witnessing;

(2) promote involvement in evangelistic training and outreach to community;

(3) coordinate evangelistic programmes that will create opportunity for non-Christian family members and friends to know Christ;

(4) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(5) present a report at the Quadrennial General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.6 **The Coordinator of Outreach & Social Concerns** shall:

(1) coordinate and encourage service to Church and Community;

(2) recommend appropriate study courses;

(3) promote cooperation of Methodist Women with other Christian Women's organisations;

(4) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(5) present a report at the Quadrennial General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.7 **The Coordinator of Discipleship & Nurture** shall:

(1) serve as a resourse person;

(2) recommend suitable materials and programmes on Christian living for women and family;

(3) encourage women in the deepening of their spiritual life and motivate them to study God's Word and Christian literature;

(4) challenge women in small group Ministry for Prayer and Bible Study;

(5) give the theme for "Holy Week" and "Week of Prayer & Self Denial";

(6) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(7) present a report at the Quadrennial General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.8 **The Coordinator of Missions** shall:

(1) seek to enable women to better understand and participate in the contemporary mission outreach of the Church;

(2) maintain contact with the missionary thrust and outreach of the Church through study and support;

(3) promote involvement in mission studies;

(4) organise Mission trips;

(5) seek ways to help women understand the concepts of mission and roles of missionaries;

(6) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(7) present a report at the Quadrennial General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.9 **The Advisers.** Upon invitation, Advisers may attend meetings of sub-committees.

¶803. CONSTITUTION OF THE WOMEN'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

CONFERENCE LEVEL

1. ***Name.*** The name of this organisation shall be the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore. It shall comprise the Women's Society of Christian Service of each Local Church of the Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

2. ***Purpose.***

2.1 To help women grow in the knowledge and experience of God as revealed in Jesus Christ;

2.2 To challenge them to respond to God's redemptive fellowship;

2.3 To make Christ known throughout the world;

2.4 To develop a personal responsibility for the whole task of the Church.

3. ***Function.***

3.1 To guide and coordinate the work of each Local Women's Society of Christian Service towards the realisation of the purpose of the Women's Society of Christian Service;

3.2 To plan and direct the work of each Local Women's Society of Christian Service within the Conference in accordance with its Constitution and Bye-Laws;

3.3 To join hands with the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women "To Know Christ and To Make Him Known";

3.4 To cooperate with other Christian Women's groups in fellowship.

4. ***Authority.*** The Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall have authority to promote its work in accordance with the programme and policy of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

5. ***Membership.*** Any woman who is a member of The Methodist Church in Singapore and is a member of the Women's Society of Christian Service in her local Church shall be a member of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

6. ***Meetings.***

6.1 There shall be an Annual General Meeting which shall:

(1) transact business and biennially elect
- a) the Officers,
- b) the Coordinators of Programme,
- c) the Chairpersons of the following Committees
  - i) Finance,
  - ii) Property Management,
  - iii) Governance,
- d) the members of the following Committees
  - i) Nominations,
  - ii) Governance, and
- e) the Advisers;

(2) receive reports from Officers, Coordinators of Programme and Chairpersons of Committees;

(3) transact such other business as it may deem necessary.

6.2 Only Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Chairpersons of Committees, the President of each Local Women's Society of Christian Service (or her representative who is a member of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee shall take her place with the same rights and privileges) and the elected delegates from each Local Women's Society of Christian Service (the number of which shall be determined at the General Meeting of the Conference

Women's Society of Christian Service) shall be eligible to vote at the General Meeting.

6.3 Notice of the General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be given at least one month in advance.

6.4 The President, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may call an Extraordinary General Meeting provided 14 days' notice is given in advance.

7. ***Funds.*** All funds secured by the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service belong to this organisation and shall be disbursed by its order and in accordance with the financial procedures of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

8. ***Amendments.*** Proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service at least two months before any General Meeting in which the amendments are proposed to be voted on.

9. ***Annual Conference Relations.***

9.1 The President of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be a member of the Executive Board of the Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore with voting rights. In her absence her representative who is a member of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee shall take her place.

9.2 Designated Coordinators shall represent the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service on the various programme boards of the Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore as The Book of Discipline provides.

10. ***Quorum.*** A majority of voting members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; but a smaller number may take a recess and adjourn for half an hour, after which time the meeting shall be reconvened and proceed with the business meeting, provided decisions taken at the meeting are ratified at the next meeting.

¶803A. COVID-19 TEMPORARY MEASURES FOR CONDUCT OF CERTAIN MEETINGS

1. ***Applicability.***

Up till 31 August 2021 or for as long as Part 4 of the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act 2020 shall continue in force (whichever occurs the later), the following arrangements shall apply to the meeting(s) of the Executive Committee, Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting(s) of the Women's Society of Christian Service of each of the Conferences of The Methodist Church in Singapore ("Conference WSCS") despite anything to the contrary in The Book of Discipline, the Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of each of the Conferences of The Methodist Church in Singapore (Conference Level) (¶803) and/or the Bye-Laws (¶804).

2. ***Interpretation.***

In this ¶803A:

"electronic means" shall mean electronic communication, video conferencing, tele-conferencing or any other electronic means.

"governing body" shall mean the Executive Committee of the Conference WSCS.

"person(s) eligible to vote" shall mean the person(s) identified as being eligible to vote in ¶803, Sub-section 6.2.

3. Under these arrangements, the meeting(s) of the Executive Committee, Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting(s) of the Conference WSCS may be convened, held and/or conducted at the same time or times —

a) at one or more than one places; and/or
b) wholly or partly by electronic means;

but provided always that every person(s) eligible to vote or other person entitled to attend and speak at such a meeting is, if such person so desires, allowed reasonable opportunity to participate in the proceedings by electronic means from such place or places as shall be specified for the purpose in contemporaneous communication with one another.

4. By an absolute majority of its voting membership evidenced by affirmative vote in support of one or more resolutions (including circular resolution(s) done by regular mail or e-mail), the governing body may, from time to time, specify any arrangements for convening, holding and/or conducting the meeting(s) of the Executive Committee, Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting(s) of the Conference WSCS including:

a) the period of notice for such meetings, which shall not be less than 7 days;

b) the place and/or places where such meetings shall be convened to meet and where each of the person(s) eligible to vote or other persons entitled to attend shall assemble, if meeting physically (wholly or partly) shall be permitted by the governing body;

c) the electronic platform(s) at which such meetings may be located in respect of all and/or each of the person(s) eligible to vote or other persons entitled to attend, if meeting by electronic means (wholly or partly) shall be permitted by the governing body;

d) how a quorum may be formed (wholly or partly) by physical presence and/or by electronic means;

e) the methods and processes by which participation in the proceedings of the meetings (wholly or partly) by physical presence and/or by electronic means may be provided, including prior registration requirements;

f) how voting by electronic means may be conducted;

g) how voting by proxy may be conducted, including as to who may be appointed as the proxy;

h) how questions may be tabled for discussion in writing and/or by electronic means;

i) how responses to questions tabled for discussion may be communicated in writing and/or by electronic means;

j) how notices for a meeting, proxies, and/or circulars and other documents relating to the meeting may be given by electronic means;

k) how notices for a meeting to supersede any previous notice may be given;

l) how a meeting may be deferred; and

m) all other matters as the governing body considers necessary or expedient for the smooth and effective holding of the meetings.

5. A meeting convened, held, conducted or deferred substantially in accordance with the arrangements specified by the governing body under ¶803A.4 is deemed to satisfy the requirements relating to the convening, holding, conduct or deferral of the relevant meeting under The Book of Discipline, the Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore (Conference Level) (¶803) and/or the Bye-Laws (¶804) despite anything to the contrary therein and notwithstanding any intermittent failure in electronic means to facilitate contemporaneous communication.

6. Any notice, form, circular or other document given or sent in accordance with the arrangements specified by the governing body under ¶803A.4 is deemed to satisfy the requirements relating to the same under The Book of Discipline, the Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore (Conference Level) (¶803) and/or the Bye-Laws (¶804) despite anything to the contrary therein and notwithstanding any inadvertent failure in giving or sending any such notice, form, circular or other document to any person(s).

7. This ¶803A shall take effect after:

a) its enactment has received the support of a two-thirds majority at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore convened to enact this provision under the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings of Charities, Co-operative Societies and Mutual Benefit Organisations) Order S327 ("the COVID-19 Order") where the quorum is formed and the voting is conducted by proxy in the manner permitted under the provisions of the COVID-19 Order; and

b) the announcement of its having received the required majority and adoption by action of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

¶804. BYE-LAWS OF THE WOMEN'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

CONFERENCE LEVEL

1. ***Organisation.*** The Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall comprise the Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Advisers and Chairpersons of Committees as it may deem necessary.

1.1 ***Officers***. The Officers shall be
a) the President,
b) the Vice-President(s),
c) the Secretary(ies) and
d) the Treasurer(s).

1.2 ***Coordinators of Programme***. The Coordinators of Programme shall be
a) the Coordinator of Witness & Evangelism,
b) the Coordinator of Outreach & Social Concerns,
c) the Coordinator of Discipleship & Nurture and
d) the Coordinator of Missions.

1.3 ***Committees***. There shall be the following Committees:

(1) **The Executive Committee** shall comprise
a) the Officers,
b) the Coordinators of Programme,
c) the Chairpersons of Committees,
d) the President of each Local Women's Society of Christian Service. In her absence her representative who is a member of the Executive Committee of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service shall take her place with the same rights and privileges,
e) the Advisers, one of whom shall be the immediate past President of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service. The Advisers shall be seated without the right to vote. The Advisers are eligible to be elected as delegates of the

Conference Women's Society of Christian Service to the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service. The immediate past President shall hold office as an Adviser for one term, however she is eligible to be elected as an Adviser for a second term, and

f) the Ex-officio members, who shall be the President of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, the President of the Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore and spouse. The Ex-officio members shall be seated without the right to vote.

(2) **The Administrative Committee** shall comprise
a) the President,
b) the Vice-President(s),
c) the Secretary(ies) and
d) the Treasurer(s).

(3) **The Finance Committee** shall comprise
a) the Chairperson,
b) the Treasurer(s),
c) the President,
d) the Vice-President(s),
e) the Secretary(ies) and
f) the Coordinators of Programme.

The Committee shall be responsible for the Budget.

a) ***Income***. The Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall receive from each Local Women's Society of Christian Service:

i) an annual contribution, which shall be determined by the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

ii) contributions toward approved Conference Women's Society of Christian Service projects;

iii) special gifts from Local Women's Society of Christian Service and individuals;

iv) offerings.

b) ***Obligations***. The Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall make an annual provision for:

i) contributions to General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

ii) support of projects;

iii) subsidy as decided by the Executive Committee for elected delegates or representatives of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service attending approved Conferences or Seminars;

iv) programme materials;

v) contingency fund.

All funds belonging to the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be deposited in The Methodist Church in Singapore in the name of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

All accounts shall be audited before the Annual General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

(4) **The Programme Committee** shall comprise

a) the Vice-President as Chairperson,
b) the President,
c) the Secretary(ies),
d) the Treasurer(s) and
e) the Coordinators of Programme.

The Committee shall be responsible for planning and recommending to the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service such study and action programmes which will contribute to the fulfilment of the purpose and the programme as determined by the Annual General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

(5) a) **The Nominations Committee** shall comprise three, five or seven members who shall be elected from the floor. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be elected by the members of the Committee. Members of the Committee may attend Executive Committee Meetings but with no voting rights. The members of

the Committee are eligible to be elected as delegates of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service to the General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

b) The Nominations Committee shall nominate the Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Advisers, Chairpersons of Committees and members of Governance Committee, except the Committee on Nominations, with the consent of the nominees having been previously secured, and additional nominations may be received from the floor.

Only women who are active members of the Women's Society of Christian Service are eligible to hold office.

(6) **The Property Management Committee**

a) The members of this Committee shall comprise

i) the Chairperson,

ii) the Secretary(ies),

iii) the Treasurer(s) and/or the Chairperson of Finance Committee.

b) A sub-committee may be appointed when needed.

c) The Committee shall be responsible for the management of all Conference Women's Society of Christian Service properties.

(7) **The Governance Committee**

The Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Governance Committee Chairperson shall be an active Women's Society of Christian Service member elected at the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service General Meeting. The Chairperson shall not serve in that position for more than two consecutive terms and shall not concurrently be the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Treasurer or the Chairperson of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Finance Committee.

1.1 The Conference Women's Society of Christian Service General Meeting shall elect a Chairperson of the Governance Committee and not less than two and not more than six active members who shall be the other members of the Governance Committee. Members of the Committee may attend Executive

Committee Meetings but with no voting rights. The members of the Committee are eligible to be elected as delegates of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service to the General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

1.2 The terms of reference of the Governance Committee should be approved at the General Meeting, at the start of the term of the Governance Committee.

1.3 Unless otherwise resolved by the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service General Meeting, such terms of reference may include:

a) Review the audit plans of the external auditors;

b) Review the external auditors' reports on the financial statements and their management letter on internal controls;

c) Review the cooperation given by staff to the external auditors;

d) Review, to the extent feasible, the adequacy of internal controls and the scope and results of the internal audit procedures (if any);

e) Nominate external auditors for appointment by the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service General Meeting;

f) Review compliance with such functions and duties as may be required under the relevant statutes or the Charities Act, and by such amendments made thereto from time to time;

g) Review interested person transactions and procedures on awarding contracts to interested parties, if any;

h) Review the remuneration packages of employees who are related to the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee members (if any);

i) Review the finance manual for adoption by the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service General Meeting and monitor compliance thereof;

j) Have authority to investigate matters in its terms of reference, and shall have access to and have the cooperation of employees and the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee. The Governance Committee shall have the discretion to invite Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee members or employees to attend its meetings, as well as to requisition reasonable resources to enable it to discharge its functions effectively;

k) Review the appropriateness of the financial reserves policy (if any).

Guidelines for Election of Chairpersons of Committees:

Only women with a sufficient or adequate knowledge and experience in the general work of the Women's Society of Christian Service and The Methodist Church in Singapore as well as a deep awareness of the present-day challenges and commitment to respond to the purpose of the Women's Society of Christian Service of Singapore shall be elected.

2. ***Elections***.

2.1 Elections shall be by acclamation or by ballot with a majority of members present and voting.

2.2 Officers, Coordinators of Programe, Advisers, Chairpersons of Committees, members of Nominations Committee and Governance Committee shall be elected for a term of two years, and shall not hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms. The newly elected office-bearers shall take office at the close of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Biennial General Meeting.

2.3 The Presidents of Local Women's Society of Christian Service who are Executive Committee members of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, with voting rights, shall not concurrently hold any elected or appointed office at Conference Women's Society of Christian Service level. Any Women's Society of Christian Service member who is in the employment of the General Conference or an Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore or is being financially supported by any of them shall not be eligible to hold the office of President of Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

2.4 One or more Vice-President(s), Secretary(ies), Treasurer(s) and Coordinators of Programme may be elected when required.

2.5 The office of the Treasurer shall be in compliance with the Charities Act of Singapore.

2.6 The Executive Committee of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be empowered to fill in the vacancies occurring during the term.

2.7 Delegates to national and international meetings shall be elected at the General Meeting or by the Executive Committee of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service in the interim period between General Meetings.

2.8 Delegates to the General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be composed of the delegates who are elected at a General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service for a term of two years. At least thirty days prior to the beginning of the calendar year, the Secretary of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall notify the President and Secretary of each Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of the number of delegates to be elected by that Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

2.9 The Secretary of each Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall report to the Secretary of General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service the names and other information as may be required for delegates and reserves to the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service as elected at the Conference.

3. ***Duties of Officers and Coordinators of Programme.***

3.1 **The President** shall:

(1) preside at the General, Executive and Administrative Meetings and shall, with the Secretary, draw up the Agenda;

(2) be responsible for the coordination of the work of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and promote its total programme;

(3) be an Ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominations Committee;

(4) be a voting delegate to the relevant Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore and any Board as The Book of Discipline may provide;

(5) be an Ex-officio member of the Annual Conference Board of Finance of The Methodist Church in Singapore;

(6) be an Ex-officio member of the Annual Conference Board of Laity of The Methodist Church in Singapore with voice but without vote;

(7) be a member of the Executive Committee of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service with voting rights. In her absence her

representative who is a member of the Executive Committee of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall take her place with the same rights and privileges;

(8) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(9) present a report at the Quadrennial General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, the Annual General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, and the relevant Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

3.2 **The Vice-President** shall:

(1) assume all duties of the President in her absence or at her request;

(2) serve as Chairperson of the Programme Committee;

(3) promote the work of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women;

(4) be responsible for organising Leadership Development programme;

(5) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(6) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.3 **The Secretary** shall:

(1) give notice of the General Meeting and all Meetings of the Executive and Adminstrative Committees of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(2) be familiar with the total work, programme and organisational form of the Conference;

(3) keep an accurate record of all proceedings and shall be custodian of all records and official papers;

(4) present all recommendations at the General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(5) notify all Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Chairpersons of Committees and Advisers of their appointments;

(6) notify the Secretary of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and the Secretary of the Annual Conference of The Methodist

Church in Singapore of the newly-elected office-bearers;

(7) be responsible for all correspondence.

3.4 **The Treasurer** shall:

(1) receive and remit monies for all budgeted items and other items approved by the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee and shall keep a record of same;

(2) sign payment vouchers in accordance with the Finance Manual. The parties involved must not be related or members of the same church;

(3) present a Statement of Accounts at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(4) present an audited Statement of Accounts at the Annual General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(5) be a member of the Annual Conference Board of Finance of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

3.5 **The Coordinator of Witness & Evangelism** shall:

(1) seek ways to help women understand the roles of witnessing;

(2) be a member of the Annual Conference Board of Witness and Evangelism of The Methodist Church in Singapore (if established) and promote its programmes;

(3) promote involvement in evangelistic training and outreach to community;

(4) organize evangelistic programmes that will create opportunity for non-Christian family members and friends to know Christ;

(5) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(6) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.6 **The Coordinator of Outreach & Social Concerns** shall:

(1) coordinate and encourage service to Church and Community;

(2) be a member of the Annual Conference Board of Outreach & Social Concerns of The Methodist Church in Singapore (if established) and promote its programmes;

(3) promote appropriate study courses;

(4) promote cooperation of Methodist Women with other Christian Women's organisations;

(5) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(6) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.7 **The Coordinator of Discipleship & Nurture** shall:

(1) encourage women in the deepening of their spiritual life and motivate them to study God's Word and Christian literature;

(2) be a member of the Annual Conference Board of Discipleship & Nurture of the The Methodist Church in Singapore (if established) and promote its programmes;

(3) challenge women in small-group Ministry for Prayer and Bible Study;

(4) be responsible for materials for "Holy Week" and "Week of Prayer & Self Denial";

(5) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(6) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.8 **The Coordinator of Missions** shall:

(1) seek to enable women to better understand and participate in the contemporary mission outreach of the Church;

(2) be a member of the Annual Conference Board of Missions of The Methodist Church in Singapore (if established) and promote its programmes;

(3) maintain contact with the missionary thrust and outreach of the Church through study and support;

(4) promote involvement in mission studies;

(5) organise Mission trips;

(6) seek ways to help women understand the concepts of mission and roles of missionaries;

(7) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

(8) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.9 **The Advisers.** Upon invitation, Advisers may attend meetings of sub-committees.

¶805. CONSTITUTION OF THE WOMEN'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

LOCAL LEVEL

1. ***Name.*** In each Local Church there shall be a Women's Society of Christian Service connected to the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service within The Methodist Church in Singapore.

2. ***Purpose.***

2.1 To help women grow in the knowledge and experience of God as revealed in Jesus Christ;

2.2 To challenge them to respond to God's redemptive fellowship;

2.3 To make Christ known throughout the world;

2.4 To develop a personal responsibility for the whole task of the Church.

3. ***Function.***

3.1 To unite women of the Church in service;

3.2 To join hands with the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women "To Know Christ and To Make Him Known";

3.3 To cooperate with other Christian Women's groups in fellowship;

3.4 To provide opportunities and resources to meet the needs and interests of women;

3.5 To enlist workers and secure funds for the fulfilment of their responsibilities in the mission of the Church at home and overseas.

4. ***Authority.*** The Local Women's Society of Christian Service shall have authority to promote its work in accordance with the programme and policy of the

General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

5. ***Membership.*** Any woman who is a member of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall be a member of the Women's Society of Christian Service if she accepts its purpose and is willing to participate in the work of the Women's Society of Christian Service. She shall also be a member of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service.

6. ***Meetings.***

6.1 The Local Women's Society of Christian Service shall hold regular meetings during the month for the deepening of spiritual life, for business and for study.

6.2 There shall be an Annual General Meeting which shall transact business and biennially elect

a) the Officers,
b) the Coordinators of Programme,
c) the Chairperson of Finance Committee,
d) the members of Nominations Committee, and
e) the Advisers.

6.3 Notice of such a meeting shall be given 14 days in advance.

6.4 Reports shall be received from Officers, Coordinators of Programme and Chairpersons of Committees.

6.5 The President, with the approval of the Executive Committee, may call an Extraordinary General Meeting provided 14 days' notice is given in advance.

7. ***Funds.*** All funds secured by the Local Women's Society of Christian Service belong to this organisation and shall be disbursed by its order and in accordance with the financial policy of the Local Church.

8. ***Amendments.*** Proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, provided such proposed amendments have been approved by the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, at least two months before the General Meeting.

9. ***Local Conference Relations*****.**

9.1 The President of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service shall be a member of the Local Church Executive Committee and the Local Conference with voting rights. In her absence her representative who is a member of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service Executive Committee shall take her place.

9.2 Designated Coordinators shall represent the Women's Society of Christian Service on the various Committees of the Local Church as the Constitution provides.

10. ***Quorum*****.** A majority of voting members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; but a smaller number may take a recess and adjourn for half an hour, after which time the meeting shall be reconvened and proceed with the business meeting, provided decisions taken at the meeting are ratified at the next meeting.

¶805A. COVID-19 TEMPORARY MEASURES FOR CONDUCT OF CERTAIN MEETINGS

1. ***Applicability.***

Up till 31 August 2021 or for as long as Part 4 of the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act 2020 shall continue in force (whichever occurs the later), the following arrangements shall apply to the meeting(s) of the Executive Committee, Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting(s) of the Women's Society of Christian Service of each of the Local Churches of The Methodist Church in Singapore ("Local WSCS") despite anything to the contrary in The Book of Discipline, the Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of each of the Local Churches of The Methodist Church in Singapore (Local Level) (¶805) and/or the Bye-Laws (¶806).

2. ***Interpretation.***

In this ¶805A:

"electronic means" shall mean electronic communication, video conferencing, tele-conferencing or any other electronic means.

"governing body" shall mean the Executive Committee of the Local WSCS.

"person(s) eligible to vote" shall mean the members identified as members of the Local WSCS in ¶805, Section 5.

3. Under these arrangements, the meeting(s) of the Executive Committee, Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting(s) of the Local WSCS may be convened, held and/or conducted at the same time or times —

a) at one or more than one places; and/or

b) wholly or partly by electronic means;

but provided always that every person(s) eligible to vote or other person entitled to attend and speak at such a meeting is, if such person so desires, allowed reasonable opportunity to participate in the proceedings by electronic means from such place or places as shall be specified for the purpose in contemporaneous communication with one another.

4. By an absolute majority of its voting membership evidenced by affirmative vote in support of one or more resolutions (including circular resolution(s) done by regular mail or e-mail), the governing body may, from time to time, specify any arrangements for convening, holding and/or conducting the meeting(s) of the Executive Committee, Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting(s) of the Local WSCS including:

a) the period of notice for such meetings, which shall not be less than 7 days;

b) the place and/or places where such meetings shall be convened to meet and where each of the person(s) eligible to vote or other persons entitled to attend shall assemble, if meeting physically (wholly or partly) shall be permitted by the governing body;

c) the electronic platform(s) at which such meetings may be located in

respect of all and/or each of the person(s) eligible to vote or other persons entitled to attend, if meeting by electronic means (wholly or partly) shall be permitted by the governing body;

d) how a quorum may be formed (wholly or partly) by physical presence and/or by electronic means;

e) the methods and processes by which participation in the proceedings of the meetings (wholly or partly) by physical presence and/or by electronic means may be provided, including prior registration requirements;

f) how voting by electronic means may be conducted;

g) how voting by proxy may be conducted, including as to who may be appointed as the proxy;

h) how questions may be tabled for discussion in writing and/or by electronic means;

i) how responses to questions tabled for discussion may be communicated in writing and/or by electronic means;

j) how notices for a meeting, proxies, and/or circulars and other documents relating to the meeting may be given by electronic means;

k) how notices for a meeting to supersede any previous notice may be given;

l) how a meeting may be deferred; and

m) all other matters as the governing body considers necessary or expedient for the smooth and effective holding of the meetings.

5. A meeting convened, held, conducted or deferred substantially in accordance with the arrangements specified by the governing body under ¶805A.4 is deemed to satisfy the requirements relating to the convening, holding, conduct or deferral of the relevant meeting under The Book of Discipline, the Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore (Local Level) (¶805) and/or the Bye-Laws (¶806) despite anything to the contrary therein and notwithstanding any intermittent failure in electronic means to facilitate contemporaneous communication.

6. Any notice, form, circular or other document given or sent in accordance with the arrangements specified by the governing body under ¶805A.4 is deemed to satisfy the requirements relating to the same under The Book of Discipline, the Constitution of the Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church

in Singapore (Local Level) (¶805) and/or the Bye-Laws (¶806) despite anything to the contrary therein and notwithstanding any inadvertent failure in giving or sending any such notice, form, circular or other document to any person(s).

7. This ¶805A shall take effect after:

a) its enactment has received the support of a two-thirds majority at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore convened to enact this provision under the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Alternative Arrangements for Meetings of Charities, Co-operative Societies and Mutual Benefit Organisations) Order S327 ("the COVID-19 Order") where the quorum is formed and the voting is conducted by proxy in the manner permitted under the provisions of the COVID-19 Order; and

b) the announcement of its having received the required majority and adoption by action of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore.

¶806. BYE-LAWS OF THE WOMEN'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

LOCAL LEVEL

1. ***Organisation.*** The Local Women's Society of Christian Service of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall comprise the Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Advisers and Chairpersons of Committees as it may deem necessary.

1.1 ***Officers.*** The Officers shall be
a) the President,
b) the Vice-President(s),
c) the Secretary(ies) and
d) the Treasurer(s).

1.2 **Coordinators of Programme.** The Coordinators of Programme shall be
a) the Coordinator of Witness & Evangelism,
b) the Coordinator of Outreach & Social Concerns,

c) the Coordinator of Discipleship & Nurture,
d) the Coordinator of Missions and
e) the Coordinator of Local Church Activities.

1.3 ***Committees.*** There shall be the following Committees:

(1) **The Executive Committee** shall comprise
a) the Officers,
b) the Coordinators of Programme,
c) the Chairpersons of Committees,
d) the Advisers, one of whom shall be the immediate past President of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service. The Adviser shall be seated without the right to vote. The Advisers are eligible to be elected as delegates of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service to the General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service. The immediate past President shall hold office as an Adviser for one term, however she is eligible to be elected as an Adviser for a second term, and
e) the Ex-officio members, who shall be the President of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service, Pastor(s) of the Local Church and/or spouse(s) as nominated by the Pastor-in-Charge. The Ex-officio members shall be seated without the right to vote.

(2) **The Administrative Committee** shall comprise
a) the President,
b) the Vice-President(s),
c) the Secretary(ies) and
d) the Treasurer(s).

(3) **The Finance Committee** shall comprise
a) the Chairperson,
b) the Treasurer(s),
c) the President,
d) the Vice-President(s),
e) the Secretary(ies) and
f) the Coordinators of Programme.

The Committee shall be responsible for the Budget.

a) ***Income***. The Local Women's Society of Christian Service shall receive:

i) pledges and contribution from its members for the promotion of its work;

ii) special gifts and offerings.

b) ***Obligations.*** The Local Women's Society of Christian Service shall make an annual contribution to cover:

i) contributions to Conference and General Conference Women's Society of Christian Service;

ii) support of projects;

iii) subsidy as decided by the Executive Committee of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service for elected delegates or representatives of Local Women's Society of Christian Service attending approved Conferences or Seminars;

iv) programme materials;

v) contingency fund;

vi) Local Church support.

All funds belonging to the Local Women's Society of Christian Service shall be deposited in the Local Church bank account and designated by the Local Church as funds for the Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

All accounts shall be audited before the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

(4) **The Programme Committee** shall comprise

a) the Vice-President as Chairperson,

b) the President,

c) the Secretary(ies)

d) the Treasurer(s) and

e) the Coordinators of Programme.

The Committee shall plan and recommend to the Executive Committee of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service such study and action programmes which will

contribute to the fulfilment of the purpose and the programme as determined by the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

(5) a) **The Nominations Committee** shall comprise three, five or seven members who shall be elected from the floor. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be elected by the members of the Committee. Members of the Committee may attend Executive Committee Meetings but with no voting rights.

b) The Nominations Committee shall nominate the Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Chairpersons of Committees and Advisers, except the Committee on Nominations with the consent of the nominees having been previously secured, and additional nominations may be received from the floor.

Only women who are active members of the Women's Society of Christian Service are eligible to hold office.

2. ***Elections.***

2.1 Elections shall be by acclamation or by ballot with a majority of members present and voting.

2.2 Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Advisers, Chairpersons of Committees, and members of Nominations Committee shall be elected for a term of two years, and shall not hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms. The newly elected office-bearers shall take office at the close of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service Biennial General Meeting.

2.3 The Presidents of Local Women's Society of Christian Service who are either members of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service or Local Church Executive Committees, with voting rights, shall not concurrently hold any elected or appointed office at Conference Women's Society of Christian Service level. Any Women's Society of Christian Service member who is in the employment of a Local Church or is being financially supported by it shall not be eligible to hold the office of Women's Society of Christian Service President of that Church.

2.4 One or more Vice-President(s), Secretary(ies), Treasurer(s) and Coordinators of Programme may be elected when required.

2.5 The office of the Treasurer shall be in compliance with the Charities Act of Singapore.

2.6 The Executive Committee of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service shall be empowered to fill in the vacancies occurring during the term.

2.7 Delegates to the General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall be composed of the delegates who are elected at a General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service for a term of two years. At least thirty days prior to the beginning of the calendar year, the Secretary of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service shall notify the President and Secretary of each Local Women's Society of Christian Service of the number of delegates to be elected by that Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

2.8 The Secretary of each Local Women's Society of Christian Service shall report to the Secretary of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service the names and other information as may be required for officers, delegates and reserves to the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service as elected at the General Meeting.

3. ***Duties of Officers and Coordinators of Programme.***

3.1 **The President** shall:

(1) preside at the General, Executive and Administrative Meetings and shall, with the Secretary, draw up the Agenda;

(2) be responsible for the close cooperation between the Women's Society of Christian Service and the Local Church;

(3) be an Ex-officio member of all Committees except the Nominations Committee;

(4) be a member of the Local Church Executive Committee with voting rights;

(5) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service;

(6) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service, the Annual General Meeting of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service and the Local Conference to which they are affiliated;

(7) promote the total programme of the Society.

3.2 **The Vice-President** shall:

(1) assume all duties of the President in her absence or at her request;

(2) be responsible for the programme of the Women's Society of Christian Service;

(3) be responsible for the cultivation of membership in the Women's Society of Christian Service;

(4) be responsible for Leadership Development programme;

(5) interpret and promote the work of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women;

(6) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service;

(7) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.3 **The Secretary** shall:

(1) give notice of the Annual General Meeting and all meetings of the Executive and Adminstrative Committees of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service;

(2) keep a permanent and accurate record of all proceedings and shall be custodian of all records and official papers;

(3) present all recommendations at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service;

(4) notify all Officers, Coordinators of Programme, Chairpersons of Committees and Advisers of their appointments;

(5) notify the Secretary of the Local Church Executive Committee and the Secretary of the Conference Women's Society of Christian Service of the newly-elected office-bearers;

(6) be responsible for all correspondence;

(7) keep a Membership Roll.

3.4 **The Treasurer** shall:

(1) receive and remit monies for all budgeted items and any other items approved by the Executive Committee and shall keep a record of same;

(2) sign payment vouchers, which shall be countersigned by the President or

Secretary. The parties involved must not be related;

(3) be responsible for the cultivation of stewardship;

(4) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service;

(5) present an audited Statement of Accounts at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.5 **The Coordinator of Witness & Evangelism** shall:

(1) seek ways to help women understand the roles of witnessing;

(2) be a member of the Local Church Witness and Evangelism Committee (if established) and interpret and promote its programmes;

(3) promote involvement in evangelistic training and outreach to community;

(4) organize evangelistic programmes that will create opportunity for non-Christian family members and friends to know Christ;

(5) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service;

(6) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.6 **The Coordinator of Outreach & Social Concerns** shall:

(1) direct the work of the Society in service to Church and Community;

(2) be a member of the Local Church Outreach & Social Concerns Committee (if established) and interpret and promote its programmes;

(3) promote appropriate study courses;

(4) promote cooperation of Methodist Women with other Christian Women's organisations;

(5) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service;

(6) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.7 **The Coordinator of Discipleship & Nurture** shall:

(1) encourage women in the deepening of their spiritual life and motivate them to study God's Word and Christian literature;

(2) be a member of the Local Church Discipleship & Nurture Committee (if

established) and interpret and promote its programmes;

(3) challenge women in small-group Ministry for Prayer and Bible Study;

(4) be responsible for materials for "Holy Week" and "Week of Prayer & Self Denial";

(5) be in charge of Women's Society of Christian Service Sunday Service;

(6) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service;

(7) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.8 **The Coordinator of Missions** shall:

(1) seek to enable women to better understand and participate in the contemporary mission outreach of the Church;

(2) be a member of the Local Church Missions Committee (if established) and interpret and promote its programmes;

(3) maintain contact with the missionary thrust and outreach of the Church through study and support;

(4) promote involvement in mission studies;

(5) organise Mission trips;

(6) seek ways to help women understand the concepts of mission and roles of missionaries;

(7) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service;

(8) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.9 **The Coordinator of Local Church Activities** shall:

(1) cooperate with the Local Church in all its activities;

(2) cooperate with the Church in the care and maintenance of Church property;

(3) present a report at the Executive Committee Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service;

(4) present a report at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Women's Society of Christian Service.

3.10 **The Advisers.** Upon invitation, Advisers may attend meetings of sub-committees.

Part V

THE CONSTITUTION AND BYE-LAWS OF METHODIST ORGANISATIONS

Chapter Two

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

¶¶851 – 892

Chapter Two
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE METHODIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SINGAPORE

Section I. General

¶851. *Name.* This organisation shall be known as the Methodist Youth Fellowship of The Methodist Church in Singapore, and hereafter to be referred as MYF.

¶852. *Objectives.* The objectives shall be to help all young people:

1. have a vital relationship with Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.
2. grow in Christian character.
3. render effective and joyous service to the church and to the world.
4. continue fellowship with one another in the Adult Fellowship(s) in the local church.

¶853. *Covenant.* We of the Methodist Youth Fellowship answer God's call to the Christian community, a redemptive fellowship to worship, study and service, alert and responsive to God's action in this age and to His seeking love in Jesus Christ to the end that:

1. in TRUTH we may know him and ourselves as His own
2. in FAITH we may be obedient to His will
3. in LOVE we may fulfil His mission among all people.

¶854. *Motto.* The motto shall be "Christ Above All".

¶855. *Benediction.* The Lord bless you and keep you the Lord make His face to shine upon you And be gracious unto you The Lord lift up His countenance upon you And give you peace. Amen. (Numbers 6:24-26)

Section II. Membership

¶856. *Qualifications and Obligations of Membership*. 1. All persons within the

MYF age shall be eligible for membership.

2. Membership in the local MYF is granted if the person has been attending MYF activities regularly for a reasonable period of time, has attended a special membership orientation course and subscribes to the following:

a) Must be a Christian.
b) Agreement to the objectives of the MYF and has a desire to fulfil them.
c) Is able to support and participate in MYF activities.
d) Is willing to consider service in MYF.
e) Agrees to abide by the Constitution.
f) Agrees to pay all subscriptions and/or monies due to the MYF.

¶857. *Rights of a Member*. Members shall:

1. have the right to stand election, to nominate or second a candidate for election and to vote in the MYF AGM at local level.
2. have the right to speak and vote at the AGM and EGM at local level.
3. have the privilege to participate in all activities of the MYF.
4. have the right to be selected to represent the local MYF at Conference MYF meetings.

¶858. *Renewal of Membership.* 1. Membership shall be renewed annually at the beginning of the calendar year.

2. The Committee, in consultation with the adult adviser(s) and Pastor, reserves the right not to renew the membership of a member.

3. Any person above the MYF age but desires to serve in the Committee or Conference Executive Committee, will be granted an extension of membership for one year if the circumstances involved make such an extension necessary for the fulfilment of the work in MYF. This extension will be renewed after one year of its inception by the same authority which extended it comprising of the Pastor and/or adult adviser(s) and MYF Executive Committee provided that a maximum of two extensions will be granted to any one person.

¶859. *Age.* 1. The age group shall be as follows: Junior MYF – 12 to 15 years; (Senior) MYF – 16 to 23 years.

2. Any person above the age of 12 may be granted MYF membership if the MYF does not have a Junior MYF unit.

3. Members of the Conference Executive Committee may be above the age of 23 but not exceeding 25 years at the time of election.

Section III. Local MYF Committee

¶860. *Organisation.* 1. The MYF Committee shall be composed of the following offices:

a) President
b) Vice- President
c) Secretary
d) Treasurer
e) Committee Members

2. The number of committee members and their roles shall be decided by the MYF Committee as she deems necessary.

3. The election term of service of the Committee Members shall be for the period of one year, except for the post of President which may be for a period of two years.

¶861. *Function.* The function of the MYF Committee shall be:

1. to give attention to the following areas:

a) **Christian faith.** The purpose of this area shall be to help youth to grow in vital Christian faith and life. The areas of concern shall include Christian beliefs, personal Christian commitment, personal conduct (Christian moral standard), the Christian heritage, the follow-up of new converts, and personal enrichment and growth: Bible Study, prayer, worship, cell group experiences.

b) **Christian Witness and Outreach.** The purpose of this area shall be to help youth to make known to others the way of Christ by the way they say and do. The areas of concern shall include evangelism (personal and group), stewardship (time, talents and material possessions) and Christian vocation (all occupations and professions). It shall also help youth to know and accept their responsibilities in the worldwide missions through missionary conventions and projects. To disseminate information on missionary work so as to encourage prayer and financial support.

c) **Christian Citizenship.** The purpose of this area shall be to help youth to understand social needs. The areas of concerns shall include service to the local church, service to the community, working relations, economic and social problems.

d) **Christian Fellowship.** The purpose of this area shall be to help youth experience in all their relationships the bond of Christian fellowship which comes from their common faith. The area of concern shall include local church as a fellowship; Christian home life; boy-girl relations; inter-church relations and

recreational activities like picnic, games and tournaments.

e) **Membership.** To be concerned with the meaning of MYF membership and Church membership. It shall encourage youth to attend MYF regularly and to encourage members to continue fellowship in the MYF.

2. Through the committee meetings exercise overall supervision of the organisation.

3. responsible for the spiritual growth of each individual member and MYF in general.

4. to appoint such posts and sub-committees as are necessary for the proper administration of the organisation and exercise control over and delegate such powers and duties to these posts and sub-committees as the committee may determine.

5. to plan and control the finance of the local MYF.

6. to consider the resignation of any member of the Committee and any other post or sub-committee and fill the vacancy thus arising.

7. to co-ordinate the programmes and activities of the Local MYF.

8. to receive members into the Local MYF.

9. to nominate, subject to the approval of the Local Church Executive Committee, adult adviser(s) to the MYF Committee.

¶862. *Executive Committee*. 1. The Executive Committee shall comprise of the offices of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

2. It shall deal with urgent matters when it is not possible to convene a committee meeting. Minutes of the meeting shall be sent to all the committee members.

3. *Duties of Executive Committee members*. *a*) The President shall:

(1) preside at all the committee meetings and shall be the ex-officio in the other sub-committees of the MYF.

(2) be the official representative of the MYF in the Local Church Executive Committee and in the Conference MYF Committee.

(3) have a casting vote.

(4) lead and direct the MYF.

(5) be concerned with the spiritual well-being of his committee members.

b) The Vice-President shall:

(1) work closely with and assist the President in fulfilling the objectives of the MYF.

(2) in the absence of the President, his duties will devolve upon the Vice-President.

(3) perform duties assigned to him by the MYF Committee.

c) The Secretary shall:

(1) have charge of all records of the MYF and shall conduct the correspondence of the MYF.

(2) be responsible for convening all meetings, that is, committee meetings, AGMs and EGMs.

(3) keep all minutes of committee meetings, AGM and EGM.

(4) submit to the Conference Secretary a list of the particulars of all local committee members within two weeks after the AGM.

d) The Treasurer shall:

(1) keep accurate records of the monies of the organisation, and submit regular reports for the Committee's information and action.

(2) be responsible for all monies due to the organisation and disburse monies to those who have been authorised by the Committee or President.

(3) present at the AGM an audited Statement of Income and Expenditure.

4. *a*) The MYF Committee Meeting shall meet at least once a month. The Secretary shall give one week's notice of such meetings.

b) Only Committee members present are eligible to vote. The president shall have the casting vote.

c) The MYF President shall chair at all committee meetings.

Section IV. Junior Methodist Youth Fellowship

¶863. 1. The MYF shall be responsible to form/organise a Junior MYF when the need arises.

2. The (Senior) MYF shall be responsible for the Junior MYF and be vested the Authority to fulfil her responsibilities. The Junior MYF representative in the (Senior) MYF Committee shall have the right to be heard and vote in matters pertaining to Junior MYF.

3. The (Senior) MYF shall also be represented in the Junior MYF committee and shall make efforts to promote interaction between the Junior MYFers and (Senior) MYFers.

4. The Junior MYF Committee structure shall be the same as that of the (Senior) MYF.

Section V. Conference MYF Committee

¶864. *Organisation.* 1. The Conference MYF Committee shall comprise the following:

a) The Executive Committee composed of the following offices:

(1) President

(2) Vice-President (optional)

(3) Secretary

(4) Treasurer

(5) Member

b) The President of each Local MYF.

2. The number of Conference Executive Committee members and their roles shall be decided by the Executive Committees as she deems necessary. Their decision shall be referred to the Conference Committees for information.

3. The elected terms of service for the Executive Committee members shall be for the period of one or two years, as decided by the respective Conference MYF AGM.

¶865. ***Function***. The Conference MYF Committee shall:

1. be responsible for the execution of the objectives of the MYF as laid down in the Constitution.

2. control the finances of the Conference MYF.

3. appoint such posts and sub-committees as are necessary for the proper administration of the Conference MYF and exercise control over and delegate such duties and powers of such persons and sub-committees.

4. consider the resignation of any member or sub-committees of the Conference Committee and be empowered to fill any vacancy.

¶866. *Conference Executive Committee*. The functions and responsibilities of the Executive Committee shall be:

1. to deal with matters requiring urgent attention when it is not possible to convene a Conference Committee meeting.

2. to co-ordinate the activities of the MYF on a Conference level.

3. to implement the plans of the Conference Committee as decided.

4. to study and help to meet the needs of the youth work and witness.

5. to be responsible for the conduct of the Conference MYF AGM.

¶867. *Conference Committee Meeting.* 1. The Conference Committee shall

meet at least once in two months.

2. Special meetings shall be held when matters requiring urgent attention arise, upon the call of the Conference President or when a written request for a meeting signed by at least half of the Conference Committee members is received by the Secretary who shall convene the meeting within two weeks of the written notice. Only the matter for which the special meeting is called shall be the agenda.

3. Only Committee members present are eligible to vote. The Conference president shall have the casting vote.

4. The Conference President shall chair all Committee meetings. In his absence, the Vice-President or an appointed Committee member shall assume his responsibilities.

Section VI. Election of Officers

¶868. *Local MYF Level.* 1. The MYF Committee shall be elected or reaffirmed annually at the local MYF AGM which shall be held in September.

The Committee in sitting shall be responsible for the conduct of the election.

2. All members shall have been active in the MYF for more than a year prior to their election.

3. The President shall be a full member of the Local Methodist Church.

4. There shall be a nomination committee comprising the Executive Committee, the adult adviser(s) and the Pastor.

¶869. *Conference MYF Level.* 1. The Conference MYF Executive Committee shall be elected or reaffirmed annually at the Conference MYF AGM which shall be held in October.

2. The Executive Committee in sitting shall be responsible for the conduct of the election.

3. All Executive Committee members shall be active members of the MYF and must have served at least one year in the local committee prior to their election.

4. An Executive Committee member shall be a full member of a Local Methodist Church.

5. There shall be a nomination committee comprising the Conference Executive Committee and the Conference Youth Director.

Section VII. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

¶870. The Annual General Meeting shall:

1. confirm the minutes of the previous AGM.
2. receive the audited Statement of Income and Expenditure.
3. receive reports from the Presidents and Committee members.
4. transact any matter which the Secretary has received in writing two weeks prior to the AGM.
5. elect or reaffirm the office bearers for the coming year of service.

¶871. Two (2) weeks' written notice of the AGM shall be given to all members.

¶872. Observers may be permitted to attend. They shall not have a vote but may have a voice with the consent of the floor.

¶873. There shall be no voting by proxy.

¶874. Voting shall normally be by secret ballot. Voting other than by ballot shall be taken for any item provided that the unanimous consent of the members present be obtained.

¶875. Motion shall be declared carried by a simple majority vote except for the amendment to the constitution.

¶876. The President shall chair the AGM and shall have the casting vote.

¶877. All decisions made at the AGM are binding on the organisation.

¶878. Decide upon any matter not provided for in this Constitution.

¶879. *Conference AGM.* 1. Each Local MYF shall send four official delegates if the membership is less than 40. Local MYF with membership greater than forty (40) shall send an additional delegate for every ten (10) members.

Section VIII. Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

¶880. The Local MYF Committee or the Conference Committee may call for an EGM whenever there is sufficient cause to do so.

¶881. *Convening Authority.* 1. Local MYF. An EGM shall be convened by the Secretary at the request of:

a) at least one-third of the membership.

b) the Local Committee.

2. Conference MYF. An EGM shall be convened by the Secretary at the request of:

a) at least half of the total Presidents.

b) the Executive Committee.

¶883. Notice of the meeting shall be given not less than a week before the date of the meeting.

¶884. Only the business requested to be discussed at the EGM shall be transacted.

¶885. The procedure for the conduct of the AGM shall apply to the EGM.

¶886. All decisions made at the EGM are binding on the organisation.

Section IX. Finance

¶887. The Finance of the MYF shall come from monthly subscriptions or tithes or faith giving or offerings of the members or friends and other approved means of fund-raising.

¶888. The Local MYF shall have a separate account from the church treasury; however, besides cash in hand, all other monies shall be deposited with the church treasury.

¶889. The Local MYF shall pay an annual subscription per member, as decided by the Conference Committee to the Conference MYF.

Section X. Amendments

¶890. The MYF Constitution may be amended provided the following procedure is observed.

1. The motion for amendment shall submitted through the Conference MYF Committee in writing to the General Conference Executive Council.
2. The General Conference Executive Council shall discuss the motion and direct the three Conference MYF Committees to bring the motion for amendment to their respective Conference AGMs and EGMs.
3. The motion is carried through only if all the Conference MYFs have a two-third majority vote at their respective Conference MYF AGMs and EGMs.
4. The Amendment shall be subject to the approval of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore. During the interim period between the sessions of the General Conference, the General Conference Executive Council shall grant the amendment effect pending approval.

Section XI. Quorum

¶891. At the local and conference levels, the quorum for Executive Board Meetings, Committee Meetings, Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings shall be one half of the respective membership.

¶892. In the event of the quorum not being present, another meeting shall be called within one week, but not earlier than forty-eight (48) hours of the postponement where, irrespective of the number of members present, the business fixed for the previous meeting shall be considered but the meeting shall have no power to alter, amend or make additions to the Constitution if the required stipulated vote is not present.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX

STEWARDSHIP CHARTER

STEWARDSHIP CHARTER

Approved at the General Conference Special Session on 16 August 2010.

PREAMBLE

Annotations

We are God's stewards, entrusted by God with resources, abilities, and opportunities, all of which are to be used faithfully. All that we are, and all that we have, belongs to God. He is the Owner and we are the stewards; we are accountable to Him even as we look to Him with faith. We are to use these resources so that God's will is done, His name is glorified, and people are blessed.

In exercising Christian stewardship we must show faith in God who shall supply all our needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus (Phil 4:19), and act responsibly in the way we utilise our resources because we are accountable to God (Luke 16:1-2). The practice of Christian stewardship is essentially a spiritual exercise, and an integral part of discipleship.

Money and wealth are useful tools for doing God's work. Wealth however, as John Wesley noted, can contribute to a decline in godliness. He was particularly concerned about the growing wealth of Methodists in his day and its adverse effects on them. In his teachings on managing and using wealth, Wesley emphasized accountability, generosity and responsibility, which are the key features of Christian stewardship. His advice based on biblical principles - "earn all you can, save all you can, give all you can" – has guided Methodists through the years, and will continue to guide us.

The Methodist Church in Singapore has been blessed by God with many resources. We also have tremendous opportunities and responsibilities. Christian stewardship can only be effectively practised if it is done prayerfully and with a biblical mindset. Spiritual discernment of God's will, integrity, accountability, and a missional mindset are important ingredients in the exercise of Christian stewardship and the management and utilisation of the resources with which God has blessed us. These perspectives and

principles undergird the details of this Stewardship Charter.

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Stewardship Charter is to provide a framework for sound financial management of the reserves and assets of the General Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore to meet its current and future capital and operating requirements.

B. OBJECTIVES OF STEWARDSHIP CHARTER

The Stewardship Charter shall have the following objectives:

1. To ensure ownership of freehold and leasehold properties for administrative and ministry use by the General Conference. Existing properties beneficially held for the General Conference ("GC-held properties") are the John Wesley Centre (excluding the portion occupied by the Trinity Theological College), the Methodist Centre and the Episcopal Residence at No. 7 Cotswold Close;

2. To maintain a General Accumulated Fund (GAF) of all reserves including the GAF-Liquid Contingency Sub-fund, the GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund, the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund, the GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund, the GAF-Balance Sub-fund and specifically Designated Funds.

3. To ensure sufficient reserves to meet at least one year's total operating expenses (operating expenses including property management operating expenses) of the General Conference in the GAF-Liquid Contingency Sub-fund;

4. To accumulate sufficient reserves for the proper maintenance and replacement of GC-held properties and future ministry capital funding, including the extension, lease renewal, renovation, repair and upgrading thereof through the GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund. The objective shall be to grow the GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund to a value of $90,000,000 and that target shall not be reduced except by a two-thirds majority decision of the total number of voting delegates of the General Conference (acting upon appropriate recommendation

from a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the General Conference Executive Council and a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the Finance and Administration Council),

5. To accumulate sufficient reserves to fund loans to the Annual Conferences for the establishment, development and re-development of local church physical infrastructure and lease renewals through the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund. Until such time as a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting delegates of the General Conference otherwise decides (acting upon appropriate recommendation from a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the General Conference Executive Council and a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the Finance and Administration Council), the objective shall be to maintain the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund at a value of not less than $12,000,000;

6. To accumulate sufficient reserves to fund loans to Methodist schools in Singapore and other General Conference agencies for the establishment, major development and re-development of physical infrastructure and lease renewals through the GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund. Until such time as a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting delegates of the General Conference otherwise decides (acting upon appropriate recommendation from a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the General Conference Executive Council and a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the Finance and Administration Council), the objective shall be to grow the Development (School and Agency) Sub-Fund to a value of not less than $2,000,000;

7. To invest General Conference's available reserves in properties and financial assets to achieve

a) liquidity to meet short term requirements, and

b) steady and sustainable returns to meet the medium and long-term requirements of the General Conference.

C. DEPLOYMENT OF RESERVES

Priority of use of reserves from the General Accumulated Fund shall be accorded to:

a) Designated Funds and
b) GAF-Liquid Contingency Sub-fund.

1. GENERAL ACCUMULATED FUND

The General Accumulated Fund shall be a reservoir of all funds including the GAF-Liquid Contingency Sub-fund, the GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund, the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund, the GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund, the GAF-Balance Sub-fund and specifically Designated Funds.

The money for the General Accumulated Fund shall come from various sources including monies received from Conference Commitments, interests from loans made to Annual Conferences, schools and agencies, interests from fixed deposits, donations, income from rental and leases of investment properties and GC-held properties, income from financial investments, and from proceeds of the sale of properties, equities and other assets.

Any allocation of funds from the General Accumulated Fund to the GAF-Liquid Contingency Sub-fund, GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund, the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund, and/or the GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund may be made by a simple majority vote of the Finance and Administration Council and confirmed by a simple majority vote of the General Conference Executive Council.

Any transfer of funds from the GAF-Liquid Contingency Sub-fund, GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund, the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund, and/or the GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund to the General Accumulated Fund (GAF) shall only be made by a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting delegates of the General Conference at a session called for such purpose provided always that such transfer shall have been recommended by not less than a two-thirds majority of the total

number of voting members of the Finance and Administration Council and not less than a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the General Conference Executive Council.

2. GAF-LIQUID CONTINGENCY SUB-FUND

The GAF-Liquid Contingency Sub-fund shall receive fund allocations from the General Accumulated Fund of at least one year's total operating expenses (operating expenses including property management operating expenses) of the General Conference. It shall be used only when the funds in the GAF-Balance Sub-fund are insufficient to meet the total expenses of the General Conference. Subsequent to utilization of the reserves in the GAF-Liquid Contingency Sub-fund, special effort must be made to top-up the GAF-Liquid Contingency Sub-fund to at least one year's total operating expenses of the General Conference as soon as possible.

3. GAF-GC PROPERTIES DEVELOPMENT SUB-FUND

The GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund shall receive fund allocations from the General Accumulated Fund for the redevelopment and replacement of GC-held properties and for future ministry capital funding, including the extension, lease renewal, renovation, repair and upgrading thereof.

4. GAF-DEVELOPMENT (CHURCH) SUB-FUND

The GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund shall receive fund allocations from the General Accumulated Fund to be used to fund loans to the Annual Conferences and their Local Churches for the establishment, development and re-development of local church physical infrastructure and lease renewal in Singapore. The GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund shall be maintained at a value of not less than $12,000,000 comprising available reserves in the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund and all outstanding loans.

A maximum loan sum of $4,000,000 shall be earmarked from the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund for each Annual Conference.

An Annual Conference may apply for additional loans provided that funds are available from undrawn portions earmarked for other Annual Conferences. Such additional loans may be recalled at short notice and full repayment shall be made no later than three months from the date of such recall.

5. GAF–DEVELOPMENT (SCHOOL AND AGENCY) SUB-FUND

The GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund shall receive fund allocations from the General Accumulated Fund to be used to fund loans to Methodist schools in Singapore and other General Conference agencies for the establishment, development and re-development of physical infrastructure and lease renewal. The value in the GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund shall comprise of available reserves in the GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund and all outstanding loans.

Each school or agency may apply for a loan not exceeding twenty percent of the capital expenditure required, or $500,000 for building projects and $150,000 for renovation or other projects, whichever is lower.

6. DESIGNATED FUNDS

Designated Funds are Funds established for specific purposes. The funds are obtained from programme income, donations by grant-makers with named beneficiaries and causes, financial gifts, bequests and appropriations.

D. UTILISATION OF DEVELOPMENT RESERVES

1. No use shall be made of the GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund, the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund or the GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund unless each application for use has been processed and approved in the manner hereinafter specified.

2. Each application shall be initiated by a body which shall remain responsible for the management and successful completion

of the project to which the application relates and such body shall be:

a) in the case of applications for use of the GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund, by the General Conference Executive Council itself or a committee thereof or by a General Conference agency;

b) in the case of applications for use of the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund, by an Annual Conference;

c) in the case of applications for use of the GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund, by the management body of the relevant school or General Conference agency and, in the case of schools, only after the Council of Education has endorsed the application.

3. Each application shall include the following:

a) a statement of the need for the proposed facilities;

b) preliminary architectural plans;

c) an estimate of the full project costs (including allowance for all cost overruns)

d) a financial plan for defraying such costs and for meeting operational costs of operating the proposed facilities thereafter. The financial plan shall include cashflow projections and indications of the sources of funds.

4. No application shall be approved without having obtained approval from:

a) not less than a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the Finance and Administration Council;

b) not less than a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the General Conference Executive Council.

5. For any single or combined project that would involve the utilisation of more than $1,000,000, further approval from not less than a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting delegates of the General Conference at a session called for such purpose shall be required.

6. Every utilisation of the GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund, the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund or the GAF-

Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund shall be appropriately monitored on a regular basis by the General Conference Executive Council and the Finance and Administration Council and a report shall be made not less frequently than once every year at a special session of the General Conference.

7. The General Conference Executive Council and the Finance and Administration Council and any committee(s) authorised by either Council shall be entitled to suspend any further use of the GAF-GC Properties Development Sub-fund, the GAF-Development (Church) Sub-fund or the GAF-Development (School and Agency) Sub-fund in respect of any approved application where there have occurred:

a) unbudgeted cost overruns; or

b) non-compliance with the financial plans for defraying costs as submitted; or

c) non-payment of any scheduled loan repayment instalment.

E. MANAGEMENT OF RESERVES

1. The Finance and Administration Council shall establish a Committee on Reserves Management to administer the management of reserves available for investment and shall adopt an appropriate Operational Guide to ensure proper management of GC's reserves. The Operational Guide may be amended by action of a simple majority vote of the Finance and Administration Council and confirmed by a simple majority vote of the General Conference Executive Council.

2. The Finance and Administration Council shall also establish a Financial Investment Panel and a Property Investment Panel to assist the Committee on Reserves Management to discharge its responsibilities.

3. The Committee on Reserves Management shall comprise:

a) a chairperson who shall be a member of the Finance and Administration Council; and

b) chairperson of a Financial Investment Panel which manages the financial investment portfolio of the General Conference;

c) chairperson of a Property Investment Panel which manages the property investment portfolio of the General Conference;

d) additional members who shall be persons with special knowledge or background in management of reserves, financial and/or property assets;

e) the Bishop, the chairperson and vice-chairperson(s) of the Finance and Administration Council, the General Conference treasurer and the senior ranking manager within the General Conference office. They shall be ex-officio members with voice but without vote.

f) The number of co-opted members shall not exceed the number of members of the Financial and Administration Council represented on the committee.

4. Until a new Committee on Reserves Management and its Panels are constituted by the Finance and Administration Council at the beginning of each quadrennium, the previous Committee on Reserves Management and Panels shall continue to discharge their respective responsibilities.

5. The Committee on Reserves Management shall meet at least once every quarter and at such other times as are necessary at the call of the chairperson or on written request of any two of its members. Alternatively, it may process decisions in writing, signed by all the substantive members.

6. The Committee on Reserves Management shall endeavour to ensure that the requirements of the Stewardship Charter are observed. It shall determine and recommend to the Finance and Administration Council investment controls such as the following to ensure long-term returns:

a) strategic asset allocations to financial investments and to property investments and their appropriateness;

b) investment goals and objectives;

c) persons with expertise in management of financial and property assets to constitute the Financial Investment Panel and Property Investment Panel respectively;

d) investment guidelines for Financial Investment Panel and

Property Investment Panel respectively;

7. The Committee on Reserves Management shall monitor the performance of financial and property investments and assess risks and report on a regular basis to the Finance and Administration Council and the General Conference Executive Council. A report shall be made not less frequently than once every year at a special session of the General Conference.

F. AMENDMENTS TO THE STEWARDSHIP CHARTER

1. This Stewardship Charter may be amended by action of a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting delegates of the General Conference at a session called for such purpose provided always that the amendments thereto have been recommended by not less than a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the Finance and Administration Council and not less than a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the General Conference Executive Council.

2. Provided further that no utilization of any Fund or Sub-funds dissolved by reason of any such amendments shall be made without approval by a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting delegates of the General Conference at a separate session called for such purpose and then only in the manner recommended by not less than a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the Finance and Administration Council and not less than a two-thirds majority of the total number of voting members of the General Conference Executive Council.

APPENDIX

POLICY FOR APPROVAL & AUTHORISATION OF NEW BUILDING PROJECTS & EXTENSIONS

POLICY FOR APPROVAL & AUTHORISATION OF NEW BUILDING PROJECTS & EXTENSIONS (OTHER THAN THOSE UNDERTAKEN BY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL) PURSUANT TO ¶411 OF THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

The General Conference Executive Council adopted the following Policy & Procedure to be followed for all new building projects and extensions in respect of churches, schools and/or all other Methodist agencies - other than those undertaken by itself - at its meeting on 5 November 2001(amended by the General Conference Executive Council on 16th July 2007 and the General Conference on 6th September 2012) and the General Conference Executive Council on 4 Nov 2024:

1. Annual Conference, Local Church & Annual Conference Agency Projects

In respect of any project subject to ¶411 of *The Book of Discipline* undertaken by an Annual Conference, a local church or any Annual Conference agency (e.g. an Annual Conference board) having a project expenditure (on a substantially fixed price basis including allowance for all cost overruns) not exceeding such quantum as may be specified for such Annual Conference, authority to approve the same is hereby delegated by the General Conference Executive Council to the relevant Annual Conference (or, if so determined by such Annual Conference, to its Executive Board) provided always that:

(a) the General Conference Executive Council's Building Projects Committee is immediately informed of any approval given by the Annual Conference (or its Executive Board) and provided with the statement of need for the proposed facilities, preliminary architectural plans, estimate of the costs and financial plan for defraying such costs as required under ¶411.3b) of *The Book of Discipline* but (where the relevant entity is a local church) the relevant entity need not obtain approval from its local conference where the project expenditure (on a substantially fixed price basis including allowance for all cost overruns) *Am. 2007*

does not exceed 10% of the average annual income of the relevant entity over the last three years;

(b) no Annual Conference (or its Executive Board) shall grant approval to a local church or other Annual Conference agency which has not complied with the financial plan for any existing project subject to ¶411 of *The Book of Discipline*;

(c) the Annual Conference (or its Executive Board) shall immediately inform the General Conference Executive Council's Building Projects Committee of any unbudgeted cost overruns or non-compliance with the financial plan for defraying costs as submitted;

(d) the Annual Conference shall be responsible for all costs which cannot be met by the relevant local church or other Annual Conference agency; and

(e) unless otherwise determined by the General Conference Executive Council, the aggregate quantum of the unfunded project expenditure for all existing projects approved by an Annual Conference at any one time shall not exceed twice the average combined annual income of that Annual Conference and all its local churches over the last three years.

2. Other Projects

(1) *Exception for A Single Project not exceeding 30% of the average annual income over the last three years*

Except where paragraph 1 above applies, each constituent entity or other unit shall submit all projects subject to ¶411 of *The Book of Discipline* for approval by the General Conference Executive Council unless any such project has a project expenditure (on a substantially fixed price basis including allowance for all cost overruns) not exceeding 30% of the average annual income of the relevant entity or unit over the last three years and provided always that: *Am. 2012*

(a) the General Conference Executive Council's Building Projects Committee is immediately informed of such projects and provided with the estimate of the costs of such project and the financial plan for defraying such costs but (where the relevant entity is a local church) the relevant entity need not obtain approval from its local conference where the project expenditure (on a substantially fixed price basis including allowance for all cost overruns) does not exceed 10% of the average annual income of the relevant entity over the last three years; *Am. 2007*

(b) this exception shall not apply if the constituent entity or other unit has not complied with the financial plan for any existing project subject to ¶411 of *The Book of Discipline*;

(c) the constituent entity or other unit shall immediately inform the General Conference Executive Council's Building Projects Committee of any unbudgeted cost overruns or non-compliance with the financial plan for defraying costs as submitted; *Am. 2007*

(d) the constituent entity or other unit shall remain responsible for all costs occasioned by such projects and (where the relevant entity or unit is a local church or any Annual Conference agency) the relevant entity or other unit shall keep its Annual Conference fully informed about the project and its status by simultaneously providing to its Annual Conference all information as provided to the General Conference Executive Council's Building Projects Committee; and *Am. 2007*

(e) unless otherwise determined by the General Conference Executive Council, the aggregate quantum of the unfunded project expenditure for all such existing projects of the relevant entity or unit at any one time falling within this exception shall not exceed the average combined annual income of that relevant entity or unit over the last three years. *Am. 2007*

(2) *Approval Process*

(a) For all other projects, each constituent entity or other unit shall submit all projects subject to ¶411 of *The Book of Discipline* for approval by the General Conference Executive Council's Building Projects Committee together with the statement of need for the proposed facilities, preliminary architectural plans, estimate of the costs and financial plan for defraying such costs as required under ¶411.3b) of *The Book of Discipline* and all other information as may be required by the General Conference Executive Council's Building Projects Committee but (where the relevant entity is a local church) the relevant entity need not obtain approval from its local conference where the project expenditure (on a substantially fixed price basis including allowance for all cost overruns) does not exceed 10% of the average annual income of the relevant entity over the last three years. *Am. 2007*

(b) If approval is granted by the General Conference Executive Council's Building Projects Committee, the constituent entity or other unit shall at all times comply with all conditions as may be imposed by (or by the Building Projects Committee on behalf of) the General Conference Executive Council and shall immediately inform the General Conference Executive Council's Building Projects Committee of any non-compliance with any condition so imposed or any unbudgeted cost overruns or non-compliance with the financial plan for defraying costs as submitted.

(c) The constituent entity or other unit shall remain responsible for all costs occasioned by projects approved by the General Conference Executive Council or its Building Projects Committee and (where the relevant entity or other unit is a local church or any Annual Conference agency) the relevant entity or other unit shall keep its Annual Conference fully informed about the project and its status by simultaneously providing to its Annual Conference all information as provided to the General Conference Executive Council's Building Projects Committee. *Am. 2007*

(3) Guidelines for Approval

Except where paragraph 1 or paragraph 2(1) apply and unless otherwise determined by (or by the Building Projects Committee on behalf of) the General Conference Executive Council, the following guidelines shall be required of all projects submitted for approval to the Building Projects Committee:

For **Non-Land Lease** Related Projects

Project expenditure on a substantially fixed price basis including allowance for all cost overruns, stamp duty, and GST.	
Where Project Expenditure is:	**Entity must show it has available to it at the bank, and/or committed funds via confirmed pledges/loans, not less than the percentage amount stated:**
a) Below S$5 million	Purchases : 80% Construction/Remodelling : 50% Lease or License : 60% [#] [#] *of initial 5 years' rental OR duration of tenure, if shorter.*
b) S$5 million and above	Purchases : 80% Construction/Remodelling : 70% Lease or License : 60% [#] [#] *of initial 5 years' rental OR duration of tenure, if shorter.*

Important Notes

i. The above is only applicable for lease and licence where payment is due on a periodic basis (e.g. monthly/quarterly/yearly). It does not cover Land Lease projects where 100% upfront payment is required.

ii. The relevant percentage amount stated may include funds committed by way of confirmed pledges or loans.

For Land Lease Related Projects

For Land Lease projects, the entity must have 100% of funds (including all other incidental costs and fees such as stamp duty) available if it wishes to proceed after obtaining confirmation of land lease costs from the vendor (e.g. HDB/JTC/SLA).

Such costs, including stamp duty, will be significant and are likely due in full upon the successful award of application of tender by the vendor. It should be further noted that unlike building works with long project timelines and payment milestones, funds for successful land lease tenders must be available within a short timeframe. Hence, the entity must either have cash-in-hand from its reserves, and/or demonstrates that it has secured in-principle 100% of funding from pledges and/or loan commitments from sister churches/members, its AC, or the GC*.

*Any application to the GC for loans should be raised no less than 12 months before the lease expiry date. This will allow sufficient time to assess the applicant's financials, and avert last-minute requests.

Annual Conference Endorsement

ALL project submissions by a Local Conference for approval by the Building Projects Committee, whether fully funded or otherwise, must be endorsed by its Annual Conference.

3. GCEC Building Projects Committee

(1) Powers & Composition

The General Conference Executive Council shall establish a Building Projects Committee to administer approvals of projects pursuant to ¶411 of *The Book of Discipline* and to monitor all projects approved or otherwise authorised. The Building Project Committee shall comprise of:

(a) the Chairperson of the Finance and Administration Council (or, in his absence or at his request, a vice-chairperson of the Finance and Administration Council) who shall be the chairperson of the Committee; *Am. 2007*

(b) four other persons, to be elected by the General Conference Executive Council including at least one person from each of the Annual Conferences who is a substantive member of either the General Conference Executive Council or the Finance and Administration Council or both; and

(c) the vice-chairpersons of the Finance and Administration Council who shall be ex-officio members of the Building Projects Committee with voice but without vote (except for a vice-chairperson who is acting as chairperson of the Committee pursuant to (a) above).

Until a new Building Projects Committee is constituted by the General Conference Executive Council at the beginning of each quadrennium, the previous Building Projects Committee shall continue to discharge its responsibilities.

(2) *Meetings & Decisions*

The Building Projects Committee shall meet at least once every other month and at such other times as are necessary at the call of the chairperson or the Bishop or on written request of any two of its members. The quorum for all meetings shall be three substantive members. Alternatively, it may process decisions in writing, signed by all the substantive members.

(3) *Duties*

The Building Projects Committee shall endeavour to ensure that the requirements of ¶411 of *The Book of Discipline* and this Policy are observed and shall report without delay to the General Conference Executive Council and to The Secretary of the Trustees:

(a) any approval given by an Annual Conference (or its Executive Board) and reported to it pursuant to paragraph 1;

(b) any projects reported to it pursuant to paragraph 2(1);

(c) any approval given by it pursuant to paragraph 2(2), highlighting any waivers it may have approved from the guidelines set out in paragraph 2(3) and all conditions imposed by it;

(d) any non-compliance by any constituent entity or other unit of any condition imposed or any unbudgeted cost overruns or non-compliance with the financial plan for defraying costs as submitted; and

(e) recommendations for the more effective administration and observance of the requirements of ¶411 of *The Book of Discipline* and this Policy.

APPENDIX

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE METHODIST WELFARE SERVICES

Prepared by the Methodist Welfare Services.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE METHODIST WELFARE SERVICES

1. DEFINITION

1.1 Words importing the masculine gender include the feminine gender.

1.2 In this Constitution, unless the context otherwise requires:
"MWS" means "Methodist Welfare Services";
"Chairperson" means "Chairperson of the Board of Governance";
"Board" means "Board of Governance".

2. NAME

2.1 The name of the Society shall be "**METHODIST WELFARE SERVICES**" (hereinafter referred to as "MWS").

3. PLACE OF BUSINESS

3.1 MWS' place of business shall be at 70 Barker Road #05-01 Singapore 309936 or such other address as may subsequently be decided upon by the Board of Governance (hereinafter referred to as "Board") appointed under Article 16 of the Constitution and duly approved by the Registrar of Societies. MWS shall carry out its activities only in places and premises which have the prior written approval from the relevant authorities, where necessary.

4. OBJECTS

4.1 The objects of MWS are:

(i) To support and provide assistance in any relief work in any manner whatsoever which MWS may in its absolute discretion consider suitable including but not limited to the relief of poverty, alleviation of human suffering, distress, ignorance or ill-health, whether mental or physical, of all needy people regardless of age, gender, race, nationality or religion.

(ii) To initiate, assist, organise and support activities and schemes of social and community activities for individuals and families for the development of their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing and wholeness through an integration of resources and programmes.

(iii) To provide and assist in providing shelter and care to the aged destitute, aged sick and those in need of rehabilitative, medical, nursing, hospice or respite care, ambulant or non-ambulant.

(iv) To provide bursaries and grants for education to the poor and needy students in Singapore.

(v) In furtherance of its objects, MWS may do any or all such other things that are or may be incidental or conducive to the attainment of the objects of MWS, and provided always that nothing shall be done solely for profit or commercial reasons, in particular:

(a) To provide quality child care and student care services for the holistic nurturing and development of children and youth.

(b) To provide assistance, education, training, therapy, counselling and remedial services, preventive and developmental programmes and pastoral care for children and youth and to support the set up of Centres or Services for this purpose.

(c) To set up Family Service Centres (FSCs) offering professional advice and support to families in distress or need and to support the set up of FSCs for this purpose.

(d) To provide for the needs of the aged destitute and aged sick, frail and elderly through rehabilitative day care, home help, home medical, home nursing, physiotherapy, residential long-term care, hospice and respite care, befriending, counselling and other similar care and activities and to support the set up of homes or hospices for this purpose.

(e) To provide medical services, family services, childcare services, counselling and health care and to support the set up of a hospital for the less fortunate and the needy especially for but not limited to the aged and the convalescing where so required from time to time.

(f) To reach out to lonely elderly through visitation by volunteers and organised social/recreational activities.

(g) To provide or assist in the provision of half-way houses or any other similar rehabilitation services for ex-drug addicts or ex-prisoners.

(h) To co-operate, network and partner with local authorities, recognized bodies, religious or voluntary organisations and other welfare agencies in Singapore, governmental or private for the purpose of achieving the objects of MWS.

(i) To obtain, collect and receive money and funds by way of

contributions, donations, affiliation fees, subscriptions, legacies, grants and any other lawful method and accept and receive gifts or property of any description whether subject to any special trust or not for the purposes of MWS.

(j) To administer or invest or distribute funds, profits or goods in kind for the purposes of MWS.

(k) To purchase, take on or otherwise, leases or licenses of land, houses, buildings, rights of occupation of immovable property of any description or tenure and for that purpose to mortgage, borrow, raise money with or without security in such manner and upon such terms as may be expedient, for the purposes of MWS. Provided that in the case MWS shall take or hold any property which may be subject to any trust, MWS shall only deal with or invest the same in such manner as allowed by law, having regard to such trusts.

(l) To sell, mortgage, charge or dispose of all or any of its properties or assets as may be thought expedient provided always that nothing is done solely for commercial reasons or for profit.

(m) To appoint and remunerate officers, agents, administrators or managers to discharge the regular duties of MWS.

(n) To support and subscribe to any local charity or public object and any local institution, society or club, for the purposes of MWS.

(o) To publish any newspaper, periodicals, books or leaflets that MWS may think desirable for the declaration and promotion of its objects or any of them subject to the prior approval from the relevant authorities where applicable.

(p) To do all such things as shall be conducive to the attainment of the above objects.

5. MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Membership of MWS shall comprise the following categories, namely:

(i) Ordinary Members
(ii) Associate Members
(iii) Institutional Members
(iv) Honorary Members

5.2 MWS shall maintain a register of all categories of members.

5.3 Ordinary Members

Any person whose name appears on the membership roll of a local church of an Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore, who is above 21 years of age and willing to abide by the Constitution of MWS may apply to become an Ordinary Member of MWS.

5.4 Associate Members

Any Non-Methodist who is above 21 years of age and subscribes to the objects of MWS may apply to be admitted as an Associate Member. Associate Members shall not be eligible for election to the Board.

5.5 Institutional Members

Any company, institution or organisation which subscribes to the objects of MWS may apply for admission as Institutional Members. Institutional Members shall appoint any person above 21 years of age as its representative at general meetings. Institutional Members and its representative shall not be eligible for election to the Board.

5.6 Honorary Members

Honorary Membership may be conferred by the Board on individuals who are Christians and who have rendered outstanding contribution or service to MWS.

6. PARTNER CHURCH

6.1 The Board shall have the power to invite any local church of an Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore to become a partner church of MWS subject to the invitee signing a memorandum confirming its adherence to, and support of, the objects of MWS upon such terms as the Board may approve.

6.2 A partner church of MWS shall be entitled to receive notice of all general meetings of MWS and copies of the annual report and the audited financial statements. Each partner church shall also be entitled to nominate in writing one representative to attend the general meetings of MWS and such representative shall have the right of voice (but not the right to vote) at all such general meetings.

6.3 A partner church shall cease to maintain such status if it gives written notice

of its withdrawal or upon a resolution to withdraw such status being passed by the Board.

7. ADMISSION OF MEMBERS

7.1 Every application for membership shall be duly completed on a prescribed form to be provided by MWS for the purpose. Every application shall be proposed and seconded by two existing members of MWS.

7.2 The Board shall consider all applications for membership and shall, at its discretion decide which applicants are to be admitted to MWS as a member. No reason shall be given for any rejection.

7.3 A copy of MWS' Constitution shall be furnished to every person admitted into MWS as a member.

8. CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP

8.1 A member may at any time by giving fourteen (14) days' notice in writing to the Board resign his membership in MWS.

8.2 A member whose subscription is more than twelve (12) months in arrears shall be deemed to have resigned. The Board may at its absolute discretion reinstate the membership of any member who has paid the arrears within a year of his deemed resignation.

8.3 The Board shall have the power to terminate the membership of a member when, in their opinion, it would not be in the interest of MWS for him to remain as a member. A member shall not have his membership terminated unless he has been given fourteen (14) days written notice to attend a meeting of the Board regarding written details of the complaint made against him. The member shall be given an opportunity to appear before the Board to answer complaints made against him and his membership shall not be terminated unless at least two thirds of the Board then present vote in favour of his termination.

9. PATRON

9.1 The Bishop of The Methodist Church in Singapore shall be the Patron of MWS.

10. SUBSCRIPTIONS AND OTHER DUES

10.1 The admission fee, rates of annual subscriptions and other dues shall be determined by the Board.

10.2 Annual subscriptions shall be payable in advance.

10.3 When a member falls in arrears with his subscription, he shall be notified in writing. If a member continues to default with payments for more than twelve (12) months after notification of arrears, he shall cease to be a member.

10.4 The Board may, at its discretion, waive or vary the subscription of any member.

10.5 Honorary Members are exempted from the payment of subscriptions.

11. RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS

11.1 All members of MWS shall be entitled to receive notice of all general meetings of MWS and receive the annual report and audited financial statements.

11.2 An Ordinary Member shall be entitled to one vote each at a general meeting and shall be eligible to stand for election to the Board.

11.3 All members shall notify the Honorary Secretary of any change of address. Otherwise, all communications to the last known address shall be deemed to have been communicated properly.

11.4 A member's rights and privileges shall be suspended if his subscription is in arrears or if he is facing disciplinary action.

12. SUPREME AUTHORITY AND GENERAL MEETINGS

12.1 The supreme authority of MWS shall be vested in a general meeting of members presided over by the Chairperson of the Board (hereinafter referred to as "Chairperson").

12.2 All Ordinary Members who are not in arrears of subscriptions or otherwise

in default and have been registered as members shall be eligible to vote at any general meeting of MWS.

12.3 At the general meeting, the Chairperson, and in his absence, the Vice-Chairperson shall chair the meeting and if both be absent, a Board member present shall be elected by the meeting to be chairperson for the purpose of that meeting.

12.4 Voting shall be conducted by a show of hands and decisions shall be carried on the basis of a simple majority of the voting members present, unless otherwise specified. In the case of any equality of votes, the chairperson shall have a second or casting vote, except in the election of members to the Board.

12.5 If ten (10) or one-fifth ($1/5^{th}$) of the members present, whichever is lesser should so request for voting by ballot, such request shall be met.

13. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

13.1 The Annual General Meeting of MWS shall be held by not later than six (6) months after the close of the financial year. The exact time, date and place shall be determined by the Board.

13.2 The notice specifying the place, date and time of the Annual General Meeting shall be sent at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the meeting by prepaid post to each member to the address given in the register of members.

13.3 The Agenda for the meeting, MWS' annual report and the audited financial statements for the preceding financial year, shall be forwarded to the members with its notice of meeting specified in Article 13.2.

13.4 The business to be transacted at the Annual General Meeting shall among other things be:

(i) To receive and approve the annual report and audited financial statements of MWS;

(ii) To elect members of the Board, as listed in Article 16.2(a), biennially;

(iii) To appoint an Auditor for the next financial year; and

(iv) To transact any other business of which seven (7) days' notice has been given in writing to the Honorary Secretary.

13.5 Nomination for election of any person to any position in the Board at an Annual General Meeting shall be in writing and shall be delivered to the Secretary at least seven (7) days before the Annual General Meeting. Every nominee shall be proposed and seconded by current Ordinary Members of MWS with the consent of the nominee. At the close of nomination, in the event that there are insufficient nominees to fill the number of vacancies for the five (5) Board members as provided in Article 16.2(a)(7), all nominees will be elected unopposed. The Board is empowered to co-opt members under Article 17.3(i) to fill any vacant position, provided there are no nominations for the vacant positions.

14 EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

14.1 An Extraordinary General Meeting maybe convened by the Board at its discretion or upon receipt of a signed written requisition by one-fifth ($1/5^{th}$) of the total number of voting members or fifteen (15) voting members, whichever is lesser, stating their objects and reasons for requisitioning such a meeting.

14.2 Upon receipt of the requisition, the Board shall call for an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held within two (2) months from the receipt of such requisition.

14.3 Notice of the meeting specifying the place, date and time of the meeting, together with the Agenda shall be forwarded to all members at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the meeting.

14.4 No business other than that which has been duly notified shall be transacted at an Extraordinary General Meeting.

15. QUORUM

15.1 One quarter of the total number of Ordinary Members or thirty (30) Ordinary Members present, whichever is lesser, shall constitute a quorum for a general meeting. If at the time fixed, a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be adjourned for half an hour and should the number then present be insufficient to

form a quorum, the members present shall be considered a quorum and may proceed with the meeting but they shall have no power to amend the Constitution.

15.2 Any meeting may be adjourned by the Chairperson upon the passing of a resolution for its adjournment.

16. BOARD OF GOVERNANCE

16.1 MWS shall be governed by a Board of Governance.

16.2 (a) The Board shall comprise members from churches of the Chinese Annual Conference, Emmanuel Tamil Annual Conference and Trinity Annual Conference of The Methodist Church in Singapore and shall consist of the following to be elected/ appointed at alternate AGM:

(1) A Chairperson
(2) A Vice-Chairperson
(3) An Honorary Secretary
(4) An Assistant Honorary Secretary
(5) An Honorary Treasurer
(6) Assistant Honorary Treasurers (not more than 2)
(7) Five Board Members

(b) The Board shall have absolute discretion to co-opt up to ten (10) additional members onto the Board.

(c) All members of the Board shall be Ordinary Members.

(d) No member of the Board should hold office in any Centre Governance Committee (CGC) unless otherwise approved by the Board.

(e) The Board has the discretion to remove an elected member of the Board from the Board, if the member at any time:

(i) has been convicted, whether in Singapore or elsewhere, of any offence involving breaches of fiduciary duties, dishonesty or deception;
(ii) is guilty of conduct unbecoming of a member of the Board;
(iii) is guilty of conduct that brings disrepute to MWS;
(iv) is suffering from mental incapacity;
(v) has been adjudged bankrupt and has not been discharged;

PROVIDED THAT before removing any member from the Board pursuant to (e), the Board shall call upon (with reasonable notice in writing whether by

electronic means or otherwise) the member for an explanation of his conduct and shall hear what the member may wish to say in his defence. Such matter of removal under (e) shall be put to a vote at a Board meeting.

(f) The elected members of the Board shall serve until the biennial AGM referred to in Article 13.4 whereupon they shall retire.

(g) No elected office bearer in the positions provided in Article 16.2 (a) (1) to (4) shall serve in the same position for more than four consecutive terms, except that the Chairperson shall not serve in the same position for more than two consecutive terms. The Honorary Treasurer and Assistant Honorary Treasurer(s) are not eligible for re-elections to the same post after serving in the same position for two consecutive terms. Re-appointment of the outgoing Treasurer to the Treasurer or Assistant Honorary Treasurer post may be considered after a lapse of at least two years.

(h) Co-opted members shall serve a term as determined by the Board but, in any case, not later than the expiry of the term of the Board. Such co-opted members shall have no voting rights.

(i) Should any of the elected Board members vacate his office during his term of office, such vacancy may be filled by appointment by the Board subject to Article 16.2(f).

(j) Any member of the Board absenting himself from three (3) meetings consecutively without satisfactory explanation shall be deemed to have resigned from the Board and a successor may be co-opted by the Board to serve until the next biennial Annual General Meeting referred to in Article 13.4(ii).

(k) The Board shall have the power to remove the Board member who is appointed by the Board ie the co-opted Member, before the expiration of his period of office and may appoint another person in his stead.

(l) The Trustee as provided in Article 22.1 shall be an ex-officio member of the Board, with right of voice but no right of vote.

(m) Any changes in the Board shall be notified to the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities within two (2) weeks of changes.

16.3 (a) The Board shall meet at least once every two months after giving seven (7) days' notice to Board members. The Chairperson may call a Board meeting at any time by giving three (3) days' notice.

(b) The quorum for Board meetings shall be a simple majority of the Board

members. In the event that there is no quorum for the meeting to commence, the Chairperson shall adjourn the meeting for half an hour. The adjourned meeting may proceed with its business if a quorum is present.

(c) The Board meeting shall be chaired by the Chairperson or in his absence by the Vice-Chairperson. In the absence of both the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson, the Board shall elect a chairperson for the meeting from among its members.

(d) Each elected Board member shall be entitled to one vote. All questions arising at any meeting of the Board shall be decided by a simple majority of the votes of the Board members present and voting and a determination or decision by such majority as regards any matter shall for all purposes be deemed to be the determination or decision of the Board as regards that matter. In the event of there being an equality of votes, the chairperson of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

(e) Notwithstanding the absence of any meeting, a resolution in writing circulated to all members of the Board approved and signed by more than half of the total number of the members of the Board shall constitute the decision or determination of the Board. For the purpose of this provision, a resolution may comprise one or more documents.

16.4 Whenever a member of the Board of Governance in any way, directly or indirectly, has an interest in a transaction or project or other matter to be discussed at a meeting, the member shall disclose the nature of his interest before the discussion on the matter begins. The member concerned should not participate in the discussion or vote on the matter, and should also offer to withdraw from the meeting and the Board of Governance shall decide if this should be accepted.

17. POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNANCE

17.1 The duty of the Board is to govern the organisation and supervision of the activities of MWS. The Board may not act contrary to the expressed wishes of the general meeting without prior reference to it and always remains subordinate to the general meetings.

17.2 The Board shall have the responsibility for the overall policy and operation of MWS, the control of the finances, power to engage, control and dismiss

employees and all such administrative powers as may be necessary for effectively carrying out the objects of the MWS in accordance with the Constitution.

17.3 The Board shall have powers to:

(a) Decide on all matters concerning the management of MWS;

(b) Promote and carry out all activities of MWS in accordance with and in furtherance of the objects of MWS;

(c) Acquire or accept leases, purchase, take, hold, occupy and use any land, building, messuage or tenement of any nature or kind and wherever situated in Singapore or elsewhere, for the benefit of and in furtherance of the objects of MWS;

(d) Remove any member of the Board pursuant to Article 16.

(e) Appoint sub-committees for special purposes as it considers necessary for the proper management and administration or in furtherance of the objects of MWS;

(f) Appoint Centre Governance Committees - its members and office holders - to oversee centres of MWS;

(g) Terminate the appointment of any member of the Centre of Governance Committees and its office holders;

(h) Employ such staff as may be necessary to carry out the functions of MWS;

(i) Fill any vacancy arising in the Board. A person so appointed shall only hold office until the next Annual General Meeting;

(j) Submit proposals for amendment or repeal of the provisions of this Constitution for the consideration of the members at the general meeting;

(k) Purchase, exchange or otherwise acquire on behalf of MWS upon such terms as it thinks fit any moveable property, which it may consider proper or necessary;

(l) Sell, lease, exchange or deal in any manner with all or any assets, whether moveable or immoveable for the time being belonging to MWS upon such terms and subject to such conditions as it thinks fit;

(m) Appoint officers to sign cheques and other financial documents, and ensure that two signatories are required for each transaction, provided that one of the signatories must be either the Honorary Treasurer or Assistant Honorary Treasurer(s) as specified in Article 18.5;

(n) Raise or borrow money from any bank or other financial institution, person or company on behalf of MWS on such terms as it thinks fit and to direct the Trustee to mortgage or charge any or all of the property or assets of MWS as security for

repayment of such sums;

(o) Accept gifts of any immoveable or moveable property from any person, society, association or corporation. Such property shall be vested in the Trustee of MWS as provided for in Article 22.2 of this Constitution;

(p) Affiliate or co-operate with any association, or society registered or registrable under the Charities Act Cap. 37 and to direct the Trustee to purchase or otherwise acquire and undertake all or any part of the property assets liabilities and engagements of any such association or society; and

(q) Any matter not provided for under this Constitution shall be decided by the Board whose decision shall be final unless it is reversed at the next general meeting of members.

18. POWERS AND DUTIES OF OFFICE-BEARERS

18.1 The Chairperson shall chair all General and Board meetings.

18.2 The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson and deputises for him in his absence.

18.3 The Honorary Secretary shall direct the keeping of all records, except financial, of MWS and shall be responsible for their correctness. He shall be responsible for the keeping of minutes of all General and Board meetings and the maintaining of an up-to-date register of members at all times. He shall vet all applications for membership of MWS and nominations for election to the Board and confirm their completeness and eligibility.

18.4 The Assistant Honorary Secretary shall assist the Secretary and deputises for him in his absence.

18.5 The Honorary Treasurer shall direct the keeping of funds and the collection and disbursement of all moneys on behalf of MWS, the maintenance of financial statements and the preparation and submission of the annual Statement of Accounts for auditing, and he shall be responsible for their correctness. The Honorary Treasurer shall sign cheques and other financial documents or delegate the signing to the Assistant Honorary Treasurer(s), together with one other authorized signatory appointed by the Board under Article 17.3(m).

18.6 The Assistant Honorary Treasurer(s) shall assist the Honorary Treasurer and deputise for him in his absence.

18.7 Other Board members shall assist in the governance of MWS and perform duties as may be assigned to them by the Board from time to time.

19. SUB-COMMITTEES

19.1 The Sub-Committees appointed by the Board for the various activities of MWS may recommend any person to the Board to be appointed to the Sub-Committees.

19.2 The Board may assign, depute and/or refer to such committee such powers and duties of the Board (except those relating to the termination of members) as it may deem fit.

19.3 The Sub-Committees shall be responsible to the Board and shall forward minutes of their meetings, reports and financial statements, where appropriate, to the Board.

20. CENTRE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES

20.1 The Board may appoint a Centre Governance Committee for every centre that operates under MWS.

20.2 The composition, powers, tenure and duties of each Centre Governance Committee (including but not limited to the appointment and termination of members and office holders) shall be determined by the Board, and the Centre Governance Committee shall be accountable to the Board.

20.3 The Centre Governance Committee shall be accountable to the Board on all matters regarding the relevant Centre(s).

20.4 The Board shall approve the terms of reference for all Centre Governance Committees.

20.5 The Centre Governance Committees are to take guidance from and abide by the vision, guidelines and policies of the MWS (and those which the Board may

set from time to time).

20.6 The Board has the discretion to remove any member of the Centre Governance Committees in the best interests of MWS. Such decision of the Board shall be made by way of voting at a Board meeting.

21. AUDIT AND FINANCIAL YEAR

21.1 MWS shall at each Annual General Meeting appoint a firm of certified Public Accountants registered in Singapore as Auditors to hold office for a term of one year until the next Annual General Meeting. The remuneration of the Auditors shall be fixed at the Annual General Meetings or determined by the Board. The Auditors shall be eligible to be re-appointed for consecutive terms. The Auditors will be required to audit each year's financial statements and present a report upon them to the members of MWS. They may be required by the Board to audit MWS' financial statements for any period within their tenure of office at any date and make a report to the Board.

21.2 The financial year shall be from 1st April of any current year up to 31st March of the following year.

22. TRUSTEE

22.1 The Trustee of MWS shall be The Secretary of the Trustees of the Methodist Church in Singapore, a body corporate, incorporated by and under the Methodist Episcopal Location Board Ordinance, Cap. 368, 1985 Revised Edition.

22.2 If MWS at any time acquires any immoveable property and investments, such property and investments shall be vested in the Trustee. The Trustee shall hold, sell, transfer, lease, mortgage, charge, or otherwise dispose of, encumber or deal with the immoveable property and investments of MWS in such manner as the Board shall from time to time prescribe, and where immovable property is concerned, shall be subject to prior approval of the General Meeting of members (or such Extra-Ordinary General Meeting of members). The Trustee shall hold such property and investments upon trust for MWS. The address of immoveable properties, name of Trustee and any subsequent changes shall be notified to both the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities.

23. AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

23.1 No alteration or addition/deletion to the Constitution and Articles shall be made except at a general meeting by a resolution which shall be carried by at least a two-third (2/3rd) majority of the total number of voting members present. Such alteration or addition/deletion shall only take effect after approval has been given by both the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities.

24. INTERPRETATION

24.1 In the event of any question or matter arising out of any point pertaining to day-to-day administration of MWS which is not expressly provided for in the Articles, the Board shall have power to use their own discretion. The decision of the Board shall be final unless it is reversed at a general meeting of members.

25. DISSOLUTION

25.1 MWS shall not be dissolved except with the consent of not less than three-fifths (3/5th) of the total paid-up voting membership of MWS for the time being resident in Singapore expressed at a general meeting convened for the purpose.

25.2 In the event of MWS being dissolved as provided above, the funds of MWS shall be used for the settlement of all debts and liabilities and any surplus assets shall be donated to approved institutions of a public character with similar objectives registered under the Charities Act 1994, as the members shall decide at the general meeting.

25.3 A Certificate of Dissolution shall within seven (7) days of the dissolution be furnished to the Registrar of Societies and the Commissioner of Charities.

26. CESSATION OF CHARITY STATUS

In the event that MWS ceases to be a registered charity under the Charities Act, the funds of MWS shall be used for the settlement of all debts and liabilities and any surplus assets shall be distributed to approved institutions or institutions of a public character with similar objectives registered under the Charities Act, Chapter 37 as the members shall decide at the general meeting, unless otherwise allowed by the Commissioner of Charities.

Revised October 2022

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