



*new*  
every  
*morning*

# VOTING ITEMS

Voting Items Booklet 2023

2023 Annual Conference

June 2-4, 2023

Grand Traverse Resort

Acme, Michigan



**Michigan Conference**

The United Methodist Church

# **2023 Michigan Annual Conference Voting Items Booklet**

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

Res. No.	Resolution Title	Leg. Cmt.	Pg
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### LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE (LC) ASSIGNMENTS

Tuesday, May 23 7-9pm – LC 1 -- [R#2023-4](#) and [R#2023-6](#)

May 23 7-9pm – LC 2 -- [R#2023-7](#)

Wednesday, May 24 7-9pm – LC 3 -- [R#2023-5](#) and [R#2023-9](#)

May 24 7-9pm – LC 4 -- [R#2023-8](#) and [R#2023-10](#)

**R#2023-1**

**PLENARY**

**Establish the 2024 Past Service Rate**

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**Motion:**

The Michigan Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits moves to establish the Michigan Conference 2024 Past Service Rate (PSR) for the Ministers' Reserve Pension Fund (Pre-82) at \$920. The surviving spouse benefit rate shall remain at 85 percent.

**Rationale:**

The PSR of \$920 per year of eligible service provides a \$20 increase per year of eligible service for retirees and maintains the required 1.30% ratio relative to the Conference Average Compensation (PSR/CAC) per conference policy.

Reserves invested in the Pre-82 Pension Plan are sufficient to assume the increased rate while maintaining a fully funded account based on current reserve balances.

**Submitted by:**

Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits  
 Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President  
 Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & Human Resources

**R#2023-2**

**PLENARY**

**Establish the Housing/Rental allowance for retired clergy  
 or clergy on medical leave**

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**Motion:**

The Michigan Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits moves to establish the Housing/Rental Allowance for retired or clergy on medical leave status (receiving disability benefits) in the Michigan Conference as follows:

1. An amount equal to 100% of the retirement and disability plan distributions received during the year 2024 is hereby designated as a rental/housing allowance for each retired and disabled ordained, commissioned, or licensed clergyperson of The United Methodist Church who is or was a member of the Michigan Conference at the time of his or her retirement or disability.
2. This rental/housing allowance shall apply to each retired and disabled ordained, commissioned, or licensed clergyperson who has been granted the retired relationship or placed on medical leave by the Michigan Conference and whose name and relationship to the conference is recorded in the Journal of the Michigan Conference or in other appropriate records maintained by the conference.
3. The retirement and disability plan distributions to which this rental/housing allowance applies shall be the retirement and disability plan distributions resulting from all service of such retired and disabled ordained, commissioned, or licensed clergypersons from all employment by any local church, annual conference or institution of The United Methodist Church, or from any other employer who employed the clergyperson to perform services related to the ministry and who elected to sponsor the retirement plan and/or welfare plans of The United Methodist Church for such retired clergyperson's retirement or disability benefits. Retirement distributions include all eligible amounts received from the United Methodist denominational retirement plan administered by Wespath Benefits & Investments.
4. The amount of the housing/rental allowance that may be excluded is limited to the lesser of: a) The amount designated as the housing/rental allowance, or b) The amount actually expended for housing/rent, or c) The fair rental value of housing as required by law.

**Rationale:**

The United Methodist Church has and functions through Ministers of the Gospel who are duly ordained or licensed. The practice of The United Methodist Church is to provide a parsonage or housing allowance as a part of the gross compensation for each of its active ordained or licensed ministers. Pensions paid to retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers of the United Methodist Church are considered deferred compensation and are paid to said retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers in consideration of previous active service. The Internal Revenue Service has recognized that the Michigan Conference is the appropriate body to designate a housing/rental allowance for retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers who are members of this conference.

**Submitted by:**

Michigan Conference Board of Pension & Health Benefits  
 Rev. Dr. Steven J. Buck, President  
 Rev. Donald J. Emmert, Director of Conference Benefits & Human Resources

**R#2023-3****PLENARY**


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**Financial Support for Archives and History**


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**Motion:**

The work of the Commission on Archives and History is essential to the mission of the annual conference and funding shall be included in every conference budget for the Commission's work and for the compensation of an archivist.

**Rationale:**

The Commission on Archives and History experienced a 50% cut in funding from the annual conference between 2022 and 2023. Further, some have conveyed the message that the Commission's work is not critical to the mission of the church. We would argue that the grounding work of the Commission functions as a continuing witness to the actions of the faithful in The UMC and its antecedents. Preservation of such documentation gives the means by which to learn from the past, equipping the church to face the future with hope.

The *Book of Discipline* defines the work of the Commission in ¶641 as a duty "to collect, preserve, and make accessible the historically significant records of the annual conference" and "to provide for the permanent safekeeping of the historical records of all abandoned or discontinued churches" and to "assist the local churches in preserving their records, compiling their histories, and celebrating their heritage," while also helping to designate, promote, and maintain conference historic sites.

The professional work of an archivist helps to guide the Commission in its duties and is essential "to maintain a fire-safe historical and archival depository and to see that all items that obviously will have value for future history are properly preserved therein." (¶641)

The *Discipline* further indicates in ¶641 the value of knowing our history as it directs the Commission "to assist the bishop or the appropriate conference committee in planning for the historical hour and other appropriate historical observances at annual conference sessions." The Commission is pleased to carry out all these assigned duties, but we can only do so with the expressed continuing support of the annual conference.

**Submitted by:**

Melanie Young, Chair  
 Michigan Conference Commission on Archives and History

R#2023-4

LC 1

## A Call to Promote Justice for Palestinians

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### Motion:

The Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church urges Michigan United Methodists to heed the urgent call from Christians in the Holy Land. It is a call “to engage in a process of study, reflection and confession concerning the historic and systemic deprivation of the rights of the Palestinian people, and the use of the Bible by many to justify and support this oppression,” Cry for Hope: A Call to Decisive Action, [www.cryforhope.org](http://www.cryforhope.org) .

The Conference members understand that the “Cry for Hope” calls for decisive action as it names the harm that the U.S. government has done by their policies in the Holy Land. We see ourselves complicit in the harm as we have failed to promote justice. So now we are declaring our readiness to act to promote the human rights of Palestinians, especially the children.

The Conference members call Michigan’s United Methodist members to honor their baptismal covenant to “resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.” Therefore, we ask our congregations and their members to take actions to resist the unjust policies that cause harm and death to Palestinian people, especially the children, in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel.

The Conference members urge each voting member and attendee of this 2023 Michigan Annual Conference to

- take this resolution to their home congregation,
- engage their congregation in study and discussion of “Cry for Hope” and learn more about the Palestinian struggle with educational resources from the General Board of Church and Society at [www.umcjustice.org](http://www.umcjustice.org) and the United Methodist Kairos Response (UMKR) at [www.kairosresponse.org](http://www.kairosresponse.org),
- find a member in their congregation to be a contact person with the Board of Justice Task Force Promoting Justice in the Middle East,
- ask each contact person to inspire members to advocate for the human rights of the Palestinians, especially the children.

### Rationale:

Scripture is clear that God’s covenant with humanity includes children. Jesus said, “Let the little children come to Me and do not hinder them!” (Matthew 19:14). Jesus is the king who said, “Whatever you did for the least of these brother and sisters of mine, you did for me. (Matthew 25: 40).

The Social Principles of THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE states, “all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God.” (¶161, G.) and describes the Rights of Children (¶162, C).

We cannot serve God faithfully while staying silent about the oppression of the Palestinian people. Especially crucial now is struggling for a future based on human rights, liberty, and justice for all people in the Holy Land.

UNICEF and news services have documented that Palestinian children, as young as 12 years old, have been taken from homes and villages in their own land since 2000. Children have been held for a lengthy time without the presence of a lawyer or even the knowledge of their parents.

The United States Government does not always act for justice.

- It is one of two countries that has not ratified the U.N. Convention of the Rights of Child.
- Legislation introduced in the past two sessions of congress sought to prevent the United States from financing Israel’s military detention, interrogation, abuse, and ill-treatment of Palestinian children. This legislation was not brought to the floor for a vote.

The Board of Justice has created a Task Force Promoting Justice in the Middle East. They are urging United Methodists to advocate for the Palestinian children. We invite Michigan United Methodists to work for justice with the Task Force: Randie Clawson, Chair; Fred Elmore, Jeanette Harris, Rev. Rich Peacock, and Alice Tucker.

**Submitted by:**

Randie Clawson, randie.clawson@gmail.com.  
First UMC Brighton-Whitmore Lake  
Chair: MI Conference BOJ Task Force Promoting Justice in the Middle East

**R#2023-5**

**LC 3**

**In Support of Creating a U.S. Regional Conference**

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**Motion:**

That the Michigan Annual Conference affirm the resolution “Support Formation of a U.S. Regional Conference” that was passed by the 2022 North Central, Northeastern, South Central, Southeastern, and Western Jurisdictional Conferences.

We especially call attention to these statements from the Resolution:

*“THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the North Central Jurisdiction supports the expressed intents of the Christmas Covenant and Connectional Table legislation, including the creation of Regional Conferences in Africa, Europe, the Philippines, and the U.S., respectively; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the North Central Jurisdiction recognizes and supports the leadership of our Central Conferences in the creation and furtherance of the 1 Christmas Covenant as well the Connectional Table’s future visioning on behalf of our worldwide fellowship; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the North Central Jurisdiction urges every Annual Conference within its boundaries to support both the Christmas Covenant and Connectional Table proposals to establish a fair and equitable general church structure; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the North Central Jurisdiction urges the Council of Bishops to expedite the process of voting on the constitutional amendments necessary to enact the regional conferences legislation, calling special sessions of annual conferences where necessary; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in line with the intent of the non-disciplinary petition submitted by the Connectional Table, the North Central Jurisdiction requests the Council of Bishops to immediately appoint a 20-25 member Interim Committee on Organization for a US Regional Conference to develop and propose to the 2024 General Conference the structure and organization of a US Regional Conference. In line with the CT’s legislation, this body would organize and plan for the establishment and functioning of a new United States Regional Conference comprising the current five jurisdictions of the United States. Committee membership should have a minimum of 3 members of each US jurisdiction, 3 central conference members and shall meet standards of racial and gender diversity. The Committee should recommend a structure for the US Regional Conference including considerations such as its membership, committee structure, meeting time, agency, and function.”*

**Rationale:**

The full text of the 2022 North Central Jurisdictional Conference Resolution can be found at:  
<https://www.ncjumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Resolution-Supporting-Formation-of-a-U.S.-Regional-Conference.pdf>

The United Methodist Church is engaged in ministry around the world through seven Central Conferences and five U.S.A. Jurisdictional Conferences. These connectional relationships are vital to the mission, ministry, and witness of The UMC.

1 As UMC membership has grown outside of the U.S.A., general church structure of The UMC has been a  
 2 challenge to the contextual ministry in each region and fair and equitable governance across the regions.  
 3 Regionalization, as envisioned by the Connectional Table’s U.S. Regional Conference and the Christmas  
 4 Covenant, would move The UMC’s general church structure toward greater contextualization and equity by  
 5 placing more regional-specific decisions closer to the people who are impacted by those decisions.  
 6

7 Information on the Connectional Table’s U.S. Regional Conference legislation:

8 <https://www.umcct.org/legislation?locale=en>

9  
 10 Information on the Christmas Covenant: <https://www.christmascovenant.com>

11  
 12 **Submitted by:**

13 Tim Kobler [timkobler@umichwesley.org](mailto:timkobler@umichwesley.org), Michigan Methodist Federation for Social Action  
 14 Laura Witkowski ([lwitkowski@michiganumc.org](mailto:lwitkowski@michiganumc.org)), Michigan Conference GC/JC Delegation  
 15  
 16  
 17  
 18

19 **R#2023-6**

**LC 1**

20 **Third Grade Reading Efficiency in Local Communities**

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21  
 22 **Motion:**

23 Be it resolved that The Michigan Conference AC anticipates that:  
 24 every congregation of the Conference to engage with local school districts to discern needs pertinent to  
 25 empowering every 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student to reach reading proficiency in the 2023-4 and subsequent school years.  
 26

27 This includes, but is not limited to: a) providing volunteers for tutoring or funding for the hiring of tutors, b)  
 28 provide \$100 for the purchase of pertinent books that empower proficient reading, c) provide at least \$100  
 29 financial assistance for supplies needed to encourage the meeting of reading goals for all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students  
 30 and d) to work within the school’s system to track the progress of reading proficiency for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes  
 31 each year. Such progress reports will become part of the annual report of the congregation as they celebrate  
 32 local ministry with their respective community to the district superintendent.  
 33

34 **Rationale:**

35 The UMC Social Principles states “we support the development of school systems and innovative methods of  
 36 education designed to assist every child toward complete fulfillment as an individual person of worth.” (BOD  
 37 2016, P 162.c, pg. 121).  
 38

39 “Wesley believed everyone should have access to education regardless of gender or class... He championed  
 40 education as a way to assure that leaders would act ethically and responsibly.” ([ask-the-umc-what-was-the-  
 41 first-school-started-by-methodists](#)).  
 42

43 “Researchers found alarming increases in the proportion of Michigan third graders reading significantly below  
 44 grade level and widening gaps in performance between Black and white students, and between students from  
 45 low-income families and peers from wealthier families. The performance disparities provide more evidence of  
 46 the pandemic’s disproportionate impact on at-risk children.... ‘Everything we know from research tells us that  
 47 retention at a young age has negative consequences across the board,’ including on dropout rates, future  
 48 earning potential, and incarceration rates.” ([bridgemi.com/talent-education/michigans-3rd-grade-reading-  
 49 scores-show-cost-remote-covid-learning](https://bridgemi.com/talent-education/michigans-3rd-grade-reading-scores-show-cost-remote-covid-learning))  
 50

51 **Submitted by:**

52 Mark Thompson [mark757984@gmail.com](mailto:mark757984@gmail.com)  
 53 Deb Search Willoughby [dsearchwillo@charter.net](mailto:dsearchwillo@charter.net)  
 54 And 8 others



1 **R#2023-7**

LC 2

2 **Affirmation of the Queer Delegates' Call to Center Justice and Empowerment**  
 3 **for LGBTQIA+ People in The UMC**

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4 **Motion:**

5 That the Michigan Annual Conference affirm the resolution "Queer Delegates' Call to Center Justice and  
 6 Empowerment for LGBTQIA+ People in The UMC" that was passed by the 2022 North Central, Northeastern,  
 7 South Central, Southeastern, and Western Jurisdictional Conferences.  
 8

9  
 10 We especially call attention to these statements from the Resolution:

- 11 "1. *Supports and amplifies the queer delegates' call to justice and empowerment for the*  
 12 *LGBTQIA+<sup>1</sup> community throughout the Michigan Annual Conference, within and beyond our local*  
 13 *churches, districts, departments, centers, and committees;*  
 14  
 15 2. *Affirms the spirit of the abeyance or moratorium as proposed to the General Conference, as*  
 16 *referenced above, until changes can be made in The United Methodist Book of Discipline;*  
 17  
 18 3. *Implores our member Annual Conferences to either not pursue, hold in abeyance, or resolve*  
 19 *in a timely fashion through a process of just resolution any complaints against clergy regarding their*  
 20 *sexual orientation or the officiating of weddings of LGBTQIA+ persons;*  
 21  
 22 4. *Aspires to become a United Methodist Church in which LGBTQIA+ people will be protected,*  
 23 *affirmed, and empowered throughout our life, mission, and ministry together."*  
 24

25 **Rationale:**

26 The full text of the 2022 North Central Jurisdictional Conference Resolution can be found at:  
 27 <https://www.ncjumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/QUEER-DELEGATES-Resolution.pdf>  
 28

29 In a groundswell response to the passage of harmful legislation at the 2019 Special Session of General  
 30 Conference, Annual Conferences elected queer clergy and lay persons to be General and Jurisdictional  
 31 Delegates in record numbers, for the first time empowering queer delegates to speak and act from our diverse  
 32 experiences.  
 33

34 Forty-six queer General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates from across all five jurisdictions wrote the  
 35 original resolution which was historically adopted at all five jurisdictional conferences in November 2022. The  
 36 queer delegates chose to describe themselves using the umbrella term "queer," but refer to the broader  
 37 community of persons with the LGBTQIA+ acronym.  
 38

39 We understand our call and responsibility as Michigan United Methodists to do good, do no harm, and stay in  
 40 love with God.  
 41

42 We call straight and cisgender allies to do good by using their voice and vote to support, empower, and  
 43 amplify the voices of the LGBTQIA+ community in The United Methodist Church.  
 44

45 **Submitted by:**

46 Mark Thompson (mark757984@gmail.com), Methodist Federation for Social Action – Michigan Chapter  
 47 Laura Witkowski (lwitkowski@michiganumc.org), Michigan Conference GC/JC Delegation  
 48  
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R#2023-8

LC 4

## Encouraging Leadership With Integrity

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### **Motion:**

That the Michigan Annual Conference affirm the resolution “Leading with Integrity” that was passed by the 2022 North Central, Northeastern, South Central, Southeastern, and Western Jurisdictional Conferences.

We especially call attention to these statements from the Resolution:

*“Be it further resolved that the North Central Jurisdiction expresses both respect and gratitude to those who have voluntarily stepped away from positions of leadership as they journey away from membership in The United Methodist Church.*

*Be it further resolved that, in an effort to ensure that decisions about The United Methodist Church are made by those who are wholeheartedly committed to its future, the North Central Jurisdiction believes that only lay and clergy members who intend to remain in The United Methodist Church are appropriately eligible to serve in governance roles such as: districts, annual conferences, jurisdictional conferences, general conference; and their related committees, boards, agencies; delegations and episcopal candidates. We encourage Conference Boards of Trustees to develop codes of conduct to manage conflicts of interest that may arise around discussions of disaffiliation agreements.*

*Be it further resolved that the North Central Jurisdiction respectfully asks all who intend to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church to recuse themselves from governance roles annual conference, jurisdictional conference, and general conference.”*

### **Rationale:**

The full text of the 2022 North Central Jurisdictional Conference Resolution can be found at:  
<https://www.ncjumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Resolution-Leading-with-Integrity-1.pdf>

The vibrant future of The United Methodist Church requires deep commitment and loyal leadership at every level. Grounded in a sense of duty and loyalty to the mission of the church, leaders are counted on and expected to make decisions about the future of The United Methodist Church with the absolute best interest of Christ’s church at heart. The selection, election, and appointment of clergy and lay leaders throughout The United Methodist Church includes the implicit understanding that leaders will ethically serve in each of their leadership roles with the utmost integrity. Leaders who do not intend to remain in The United Methodist Church entangle themselves in a significant conflict of interest. The service of a leader whose call to discipleship is aligned with The United Methodist Church is prevented by the continued leadership of an individual who has made a private decision and/or public declaration to leave The United Methodist Church.

In November of 2022, and in historic fashion, a resolution in support of leading with integrity was adopted at all five Jurisdictional Conferences

### **Submitted by:**

Deb Search Willoughby (dsearchwillo@charter.net), Methodist Federation for Social Action – Michigan Chapter  
 Laura Witkowski (lwitkowski@michiganumc.org), Michigan Conference GC/JC Delegation

R#2023-9

LC 3

## Supporting the Removal of Discriminatory Policies

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### **Motion:**

Be it resolved that the Michigan Annual Conference supports the removal of all discriminatory policies and harmful language related to sexual orientation, and urges delegates to adopt the following petitions; petitions already submitted and that will be before the voting body of the next General Conference:

### **Petition No: 20730-CB-¶161-G;**

Entitled: Revised Social Principles-161 and 162

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 208](#)

Summary: Removes the statement that affirms marriage as only between “one man and one woman.”

Removes the statement that only affirms “heterosexual” marriage. Removes, “The UMC does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching.”

### **Petition No: 20177-FO-¶304.3**

Entitled: A Simple Plan #3

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 624](#)

Summary: Removes ¶304.3 which states, “self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.” Also removes the corresponding footnote stating that “self-avowed practicing homosexual is understood to mean that a person openly acknowledges to a bishop, district superintendent, district committee of ordained ministry, Board of Ordained Ministry, or clergy session that the person is a practicing homosexual; or is living in a same-sex marriage, domestic partnership or civil union, or is a person who publicly states she or he is a practicing homosexual.”

### **Petition No: 20469-OM-¶341.6**

Entitled: A Simple Plan #5

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 1041](#)

Summary: Removes ¶341.6, which states (under unauthorized conduct), “ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches.”

### **Petition No: 20181-FA-¶613-G**

Entitled: A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 6 of 8

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 504](#)

Summary: Removes ¶613.19, which prohibits annual conferences from giving “United Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group, or otherwise use such funds to promote the acceptance of homosexuality . . . “

### **Petition No: 20190-FA-¶806-G**

Entitled: A Fully Inclusive Way Forward-Part 7 of 8

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 1, Page 508](#)

Summary: Removes ¶806.9, which tasks GCFA with “ensuring that no board, agency, committee, commission, or council gives United Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group . . . “

### **Petition No: 20304-HS-¶415.6-G**

Entitled: Next Generation UMC #11—Amend Episcopal Responsibilities

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 977](#)

Summary: Removes statements prohibiting bishops from commissioning, ordaining, or consecrating persons determined to be “self-avowed practicing homosexuals.”

### **Petition No: 20387-JA-¶2711.3-G**

Entitled: Next Generation UMC #22—Penalties

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 933](#)

Summary: Removes predetermined, mandatory minimum penalties for clergy who officiate same sex weddings.

**Petition Number: 20365-JA-¶2702.1-G**

Entitled: Next Generation UMC #21 - Chargeable Offenses

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 924](#)

Summary: Removes chargeable offenses that target “self-avowed practicing homosexuals” and clergy who conduct same-sex weddings.

**Petition No: 20420-OM-¶310.2d-G**

Entitled: A Simple Plan #4

[ADCA Vol 2, Sec 2, Page 1022](#)

Summary: Removes statements from Footnote 3 that repeat phrases being removed from other paragraphs in the BOD.

Be it further resolved that the Michigan Annual Conference secretary shall send copies of this resolution to: all General and Jurisdictional Conference delegates and alternates, the Commission on General Conference; and the Council of Bishops.

**Rationale:**

A more diverse and fully welcoming UMC is a testament to a more complete image of God, which includes persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities. A more diverse and fully welcoming UMC allows all United Methodists to offer their prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness, as followers of Jesus, to further Christ’s mission.

By the power of the Holy Spirit, God calls and includes all persons into the life and leadership of the Church, transcending the limitations of human categorization. The current language in the Book of Discipline places limits on Christ’s teaching and example of God’s universal love. The current language in the Book of Discipline falls short of embodying the spirit of John Wesley’s simple rules to do no harm, do all the good we can, and love God.

Legislative changes to the Book of Discipline would reduce barriers and allow movement toward wider diversity and inclusion in our United Methodist Church.

**Submitted by:**

Tim Kobler timkobler@umichwesley.org  
Christina Wright cwright1223@gmail.com  
And 8 others

**R#2023-10**

**LC 4**

**Recognize the Unborn Baby**

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**Motion:**

Resolved that the Michigan Area Annual Conference recognize the unborn baby in the womb as fully human from the moment of conception.

**Rationale:**

There have been many times throughout history when a society has singled out a certain group to be marginalized, dehumanized, and stripped of their most basic human rights. The idea that we can exclude some humans from receiving human rights has led to enslavement of those with dark skin, oppression of those who are female, and systematic annihilation of those with Jewish ethnicity.

1 Today we impose the exact same injustice on our unborn brothers and sisters. We say "because you are  
2 younger, you have no right to live." We dismember, decapitate and disembowel them in the name of individual  
3 choice, a justification sickly similar to the ones used to support the slaughter of Jews and the enslavement  
4 of Africans.  
5

6 The unborn are undeniably human. Scripture and science make that clear. Yes, they are less developed.  
7 They are weaker than us. But do we kill other humans because they are less developed, weak or dependent?  
8 Absolutely not! Instead, we see these characteristics as a sign that these people are even more deserving of  
9 our protection.  
10

11 Virtually every embryology textbook affirms that conception is the beginning of new life. "In that fraction of a  
12 second when the chromosomes form pairs, the sex of the new child will be determined, hereditary  
13 characteristics received from each parent will be set, AND A NEW LIFE WILL HAVE BEGUN." Human  
14 Development, pp 28-29 (1974) (emphasis added).  
15

16 Are there difficult, or even tragic situations that may lead a pregnant woman to seek an abortion?  
17 Unquestionably. How should the church respond to those situations? Offer the killing of an innocent human  
18 being as a viable option? No. Instead we must recognize the humanity and value of mother and child,  
19 welcome them into our fold, and seek to love and protect them both.  
20

21 **Submitted by:**  
22 Mike Cooper, laity Gaylord First United Methodist Church [sadiebuster333@gmail.com](mailto:sadiebuster333@gmail.com)  
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35 **R#2023-11**

**PLENARY**

**2024 Minimum Salary Schedule**

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37  
38 **Motion:**  
39 The Commission on Equitable Compensation (CEC) moves the following Minimum Salary Schedule be  
40 adopted for 2024 by the Michigan Conference.  
41

42 In addition, the CEC asks churches to budget a minimum of \$1,500 for professional expenses and continuing  
43 education, exclusive of mileage reimbursements for each full-time clergy person under appointment. For  
44 clergy serving less than full-time, the amount set should equal no less than the appointment percentage (i.e.,  
45 a half-time appointment's minimum would be at least \$750, etc.)  
46

47 Churches are strongly urged to compensate clergy whose years of service are beyond this chart's years by  
48 considering both years of service as clergy and inflation forces. While electing not to provide clergy with a  
49 raise might alleviate pressure on the church budget, it places unfair stress on clergy and is demoralizing. The  
50 Commission on Equitable Compensation also understands the financial distress that many churches are  
51 experiencing.  
52  
53  
54  
55

	Local Pastor			Associated Member			Provisional Member (Elder)			Elder in Full Connection / Full Membership		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Year 1	\$38,752	\$41,038	\$42,269	*	*	*	\$43,245	\$45,796	\$47,170	***	***	***
Year 2	\$39,140	\$41,449	\$42,692	*	*	*	\$43,677	\$46,254	\$47,642	***	***	***
Year 3	\$39,528	\$41,863	\$43,119	*	*	*	\$44,109	\$46,717	\$48,119	\$46,143	\$48,865	\$50,331
Year 4	\$39,916	\$42,282	\$43,550	*	*	*	\$44,541	\$47,184	\$48,600	\$46,604	\$49,354	\$50,835
Year 5	\$40,304	\$42,705	\$43,986	\$42,122	\$44,607	45,945	\$44,973	\$47,656	\$49,086	\$47,065	\$49,848	\$51,343
Year 6	\$40,692	\$43,132	\$44,426	\$42,543	\$45,053	46,405	\$45,505	\$48,133	\$49,577	\$47,526	\$50,346	\$51,856
Year 7	\$41,080	\$43,563	\$44,870	\$42,964	\$45,504	46,869	\$45,837	\$48,614	\$50,072	\$47,987	\$50,850	\$52,376
Year 8	\$41,468	\$43,999	\$45,319	\$43,385	\$45,959	47,338	\$46,269	\$49,100	\$50,573	\$48,448	\$51,358	\$52,899
Year 9	\$41,856	\$44,439	\$45,772	\$43,806	\$46,418	47,811	**	**	**	\$48,909	\$51,872	\$53,428
Year 10	\$42,244	\$44,883	\$46,229	\$44,227	\$46,883	48,289	**	**	**	\$49,370	\$52,390	\$53,962

An increase of 3.0% for all clergy is based on based on the Social Security increase for 2023 (4.7%) and the rate of inflation (8.7%). Please refer to [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov) for the figures.

¶322.1 (3) of the [2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline](#) explains \*  
 ¶327 of the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline explains \*\*  
 ¶335 of the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline explains \*\*\*

**Submitted by:**  
 Commission on Equitable Compensation  
 Mona Joslyn, Chair