

¶ 405. *Election and Consecration of Bishops*

1. *Eligibility*—All ordained Elders under the age of sixty-eight in full membership with a United Methodist annual conference and in active service are eligible to the episcopacy.

2. *Term*—a) In Northern Europe and Eurasia a bishop is elected for a first term of eight years. A bishop can be reelected for a second term of four years. A bishop who has served a second term, and will reach the official retirement age in his or her country within the following quadrennium, can be reelected for a third term of four years.

b) An elder between the ages of sixty-four sixty-eight can only be elected for a term of four years.

3. *Nomination*—a) An annual conference, in the session immediately prior to the next regular session of the central conference, may name one or more nominees for episcopal election. Also members, groups of members, disciplinary entities, and organizations within The United Methodist Church in Northern Europe and Eurasia can place a nomination. All nominations shall be made in writing to the central conference committee on episcopacy within a time limit set by the central conference council.

b) A nomination must be made distinctively for one of the two areas.

c) All nominations shall be accompanied by a presentation of the candidate in writing – half a page A4 (500 words, 30 lines). The chairperson of the central conference committee on episcopacy must approve the presentation before further distribution. Presentation of persons nominated within the set time limit will be published in the pre-conference material.

d) Similar procedures shall be developed for persons nominated by ballot who receive ten votes or 5 percent of the votes cast, and the information shall be made available to the delegates at the site of the conference.

e) The Northern Europe and European United Methodist magazines and web pages will follow the nomination process on their own initiative from a journalistic perspective. Both nominators and nominees can make themselves available for additional information.

f) Nominators, in cooperation with the central conference committee on episcopacy, shall make it possible for the nominees to be present at the central conference.

g) A public presentation and hearing will be held at the central conference.

h) Debate and election speeches are allowed until the nomination is closed.

4. *Process*—a) Election is by closed ballot and takes place in a session set by the central conference.

b) Tellers elected by the conference will count the votes.

c) Delegates, in electing bishops, shall give due consideration to the inclusiveness of The United Methodist Church with respect to sex, race, and national origin. In addition, consideration shall be given to the nature of superintendency as described in ¶ 401.

d) The ballot is secret and personal. Delegates cannot be bound to vote for any specific nominee.

e) Two thirds of given and valid votes are necessary to elect a bishop.

5. *Consecration* - of bishops takes place at the session of the conference at which election occurs or at a place and time designated by the conference. The consecration service may include bishops from other jurisdictional and central conferences. At least one elder and one lay shall participate in the consecration. It is strongly urged that the consecration service also include representatives from other Christian communions, particularly those with whom we have a formal agreement that includes the mutual recognition of ministry and ordination

¶ 547. *Conference Agencies*

1. A central conference may have a standing committee on women's work. This committee should preferably be composed of the women delegates and such other persons as the central conference may elect.

The duty of this committee shall be to study the relation of women to the Church and to devise ways and means of developing this portion of the Church membership, to the end that it may assume its rightful responsibilities in the extension of the Kingdom. The committee shall make recommendations to the central conference regarding women's organizations within its areas. A central conference-organization may become a member of the World Federation of Methodist Women and may elect a representative to the World Federation of Methodist Women within the provisions of the federation.

2. A central conference may organize a women's unit, after consultation with the committee on women's work, in connection with any annual conference or provisional annual conference within its bounds and provide a constitution and bylaws for it.

3. A central conference that adapts and edits the *Discipline* as provided in ¶ 543.16 shall establish a judicial court, which in addition to other duties that the central conference may assign to it shall hear and determine the legality of any action of the central conference taken under the adapted portions of the *Discipline* or of a decision of law by the presiding bishop of the central conference pertaining to the adapted portions of the *Discipline*, upon appeal by the presiding bishop or by one-fifth of the members of the central conference. Further, the judicial court shall hear and determine the legality if any action of an annual conference taken under the adapted portions of the *Discipline* or of a decision of law by the presiding bishop of the annual conference pertaining to the adapted portion of the *Discipline*, upon appeal of the presiding bishop or of such percentage of the members of the annual conference as may be determined by the central conference concerned.

a) Membership - The court shall be composed of one member each, with personal substitute, from Denmark, Estonia, Finland S/F, Latvia/Lithuania, Norway, Russia C/NW/E/S and Ukraine/Moldova. Three members shall be clergy in full membership, and three shall be lay members of the church and been so for at least four years. The members are elected for four years and can be re-elected once for four more years. No one can serve more than two out of three quadrennia. A person over 70 years is not eligible. The term of service expires at the closure of the central conference session where a successor is elected. Members of the court are elected only upon nominations from annual and national district conference. The chairperson of the court is present at the central conference sessions.

b) Substitutes - Substitutes shall be elected in same numbers and by same rules as for regular members. Should a vacancy arise during the quadrennium, a clergy member is replaced by a clergy and a lay member by a lay person, if possible, from the same country or region. The substitute shall serve till the end of the four-year term.

c) Organization - The court elects a chairperson and a secretary at the closure of the central conference session.

d) Restrictions - Members of the judicial court shall be ineligible to serve as delegates to the central conference, members of the central conference executive committee, the central conference committee on the Discipline, or cannot be appointed on central conference leadership level. No member of the court who also is a member of a central conference board or committee shall vote or take part in deliberations on matters concerning this board or committee; instead, a substitute shall serve on such a matter.

e) Meetings - The judicial court meets when there are matters to be dealt with. Four members constitute a quorum. Simple majority is enough for a decision; in case of equal number of votes, the opinion of the chairperson prevails. All persons who in one way or another are involved in a case, shall be parties to the proceeding and have the right to present evidence. Other persons with a direct or indirect interest in a case may also present their views.

f) Jurisdictions – The jurisdiction of the court is defined in the Constitution § 31, Article IV.6

g) Matters – Within its jurisdiction the court shall hear and determine the legality of: (1) decisions by the central conference, annual and national district conferences and their boards and committees, when appealed by the bishop or by no less than a fifth of the voting members of the central conference or a third of the voting members in an annual or national district conference. The judicial court can confirm such decisions or declare them as such or partly in violation of the law of the church. (2) Questions

arising on the rules, regulations, and such revised, adapted, or new sections of the central conference Discipline.

h) Notification and Publication – The decisions of the judicial court shall in its entirety be sent to the bishop and all parties to the proceeding. All decisions during the quadrennium shall be reported to the central conference and printed in its minutes if necessary in a separate edition. A summary for each decision shall be published in the official magazines of the church.

4. A central conference may have a standing committee on young people's ministry. This committee shall be composed of youth, young adults, and adult leaders of youth or young-adult ministry from each annual conference in the central conference. The duty of this committee shall be to study the relation of young people to the Church and to devise ways and means of developing the Church's ministry for, with, and by young people. The committee shall make recommendations to the central conference regarding youth and young-adult organizations within its areas as well as elect delegates to the Global Young People's Convocation (§ 1210).

5. Every board, standing committee, commission, council, and work area of the central conference shall designate one of its members as its coordinator of witness ministries. These persons shall help the agencies of which they are members to engage in witness ministries and, in particular, to ask, "How are we intentionally reaching new people for Jesus Christ through our ministries?" and "How are we helping new people grow and mature as disciples of Jesus Christ through our ministries and areas of responsibility?"