



Standing Committee on  
Central Conference Matters  
Connectional Table  
Council of Bishops  
In partnership with the  
Christmas Covenant

# WORLDWIDE REGIONALIZATION

## Summary of General Conference decisions

### Summary

- » The Worldwide Regionalization legislation proposes to change the names of the existing central conferences into regional conferences and to create a new U.S. regional conference enabling The UMC in the U.S. to decide on specific U.S. matters.
- » Each regional conference will have authority to maximize the effectiveness of mission and ministry in its context by adapting portions of The Book of Discipline.
- » All regional conferences share the same Constitution, Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task, The Ministry of All Christians, and Social Principles enacted by General Conference. These are not adaptable by regional conferences. The Council of Bishops, Judicial Council, General Agencies and General Conference are fully maintained.

### Purpose (Why)

#### FOCUS ON MISSION AND MINISTRY

All Regional Conferences can implement the mission and ministry in the most effective ways for their context(s) and culture(s).

Therefore, General Conference can focus on the mission and ministry of our worldwide denomination.

Through Worldwide Regionalization the gifts and resources of every region can flourish and thereby enrich our connection.

### Key Values

Worldwide Regionalization creates relevance and equity across the Church without privileging one region as the center and others as peripheries. All regions will have the same rights and privileges. This will be a good foundation for building relationships of mutuality grounded in trust.

It will be a next step in living into our covenant to be a worldwide connection (see Companion Litany to Our Covenant for the Worldwide UMC, BOD ¶ 125).

### Expanding Current Polity

#### FOR THE UMC OUTSIDE THE USA

For present central conferences, the biggest change is a new name: they become regional conferences.

Their powers and duties remain unchanged. The authority presently given to them is even strengthened by being included in the Constitution (see Constitution ¶ 31).

Furthermore, through another decision of General Conference, the central (future regional) conferences are granted the authority to determine the definition and rites on marriage as well as to define standards of ordination.



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## FOR THE UMC IN THE USA

The USA will become a regional conference with the same powers and duties as all other regional conferences.

An interim regional committee is created for the transition into a regional conference. After the U.S. regional conference meets for the first time, the regional committee will cease to exist.

The U.S. regional conference will continue with five Jurisdictions. A committee will study the future of Jurisdictions.

## FOR GENERAL CONFERENCE

General Conference will keep full legislative power on “all matters distinctively connectional”. It will decide with a 60 % majority what regional conferences are allowed to adapt (see Constitution ¶ 16).

## After General Conference

### RATIFICATION

The petition to “amend the Constitution to create Regional Conferences on a worldwide basis” was approved by 78 % of delegates to General Conference. However, constitutional changes also require the approval of two-thirds of the aggregate votes of all annual conferences around the world.

Ratification by the annual conferences is critical and required for Worldwide Regionalization to take effect.

## TOWARDS A GENERAL BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

General Conference re-approved a mandate to develop a General Book of Discipline that clarifies what is not adaptable by regional conferences.

Your delegates to General Conference will organize an opportunity to provide feedback on the current draft of a General Book of Discipline before the end of December 2024.

For additional information, please  
scan the following QR code:

