"I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people..." Amos 7:8



WITNESS

Oregon-Idaho Chapter, Methodist Federation for Social Action

MAY 15, 2021

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MEETS APRIL 23-24

Rev. Steve Mitchell

Action Requests and Standing Resolutions proposed by members of the Annual Conference or bodies of the Annual Conference for action by the 2021 Session of Annual Conference were considered by the Legislative Assembly on April 23 and 24. The Legislative Assembly recommends actions to be taken by the Annual Conference on each item. The Legislative Assembly also has the power to revise and rewrite proposals to be submitted in place of the items.

The Annual Conference packet will include the Action Requests and the changes and recommendations of the Legislative Assembly, and they can be found on the 2021 Annual Conference webpage at https://www.umoi.org/ac on the Annual Conference and Rules section. At the time of writing this, the Legislative Assembly packet holds the original proposals. There is another packet of amendments to be considered at the Saturday session of the Legislative Assembly that will show additional actions taken.

Here is a summary of the Action requests and Standing Resolutions and the actions for or against recommended by the Legislative Assembly. MFSA will send out recommendations for how to vote in a later email.

Consent Calendar for Approval, Majority Vote Needed:

- *AR 2 Revision of Board of Ordained Ministry Scholarship Policy.* To include supply pastors and raise limits to $1000.

- *AR 5 Clarify Sexual Ethics Policy to Include Retired Clergy.* The title is pretty self-explanatory of the purpose of this Action Request.

- *AR 7 Delete Conference Rule 10.042. (Clergy Election vote percentage)* This Rule requires a 2/3 vote by clergy for election as a member and ordination, but the Discipline requires a ¾ vote, so the rule is invalid. (This may require a 2/3 vote to change, but it is moot since it conflicts with the *Discipline*.)

- *AR 12 Amending Clergy Housing Standards and Policy.* Updates and adds to the current policy. The Assembly made an addendum to the original proposal.

- *AR 13 Join the Oregon Interfaith Solar Campaign.* Encourages local congregations to participate in this opportunity, or at least to study the possibility and its implications for fighting climate change.

Consent Calendar for Approval, 2/3 Vote Needed (Standing Resolutions and Conference Rules)

- *AR 1- Revision of Conference Rule 10.011.* Revision of the rule requiring psychological testing for candidates for ministry to include those applying for Certified Lay Ministry; also changes $200 fee requirement by local church to 1/3 of the cost by entities considering the candidacy.

- *AR 10 New Conference Rule 2.041c.* This rule clarifies that Action Requests/Standing Resolutions that are recommended by the Legislative Assembly for defeat will still come to the Plenary Session for vote, even if the item does not appear on the Consent Calendar for Defeat, as Conference Rules clearly state that the Plenary Session takes the final action on items submitted.

- *SR1 Supporting Sanctuary for Immigrants and Refugees.* This renews a current Standing Resolution.

- *SR 4 Supporting Middle East Peace Efforts.* This is a renewal of a current Standing Resolution.

- *SR 5 Supporting the Right to Peacefully Address Injustice through Boycotts.* This is a renewal of a current Standing Resolution.

Action Requests Recommended for Approval but Not on the Consent Calendar

- *AR 3 Support for Christmas Covenant Proposals.* This is a proposal for General Conference to create a U.S. Central Conference, similar to the Central Conferences of other countries. Provisions would be made for each Central Conference to determine ordination standards for ministry while also maintaining our denomination as a global church. The Action Request includes a link to a website with more information about this proposal. It is also acknowledged that there are several other proposals being made. This is one of several potential directions to be taken by the next General Conference regarding unity/separation of the denomination.

- *SR 3 Confronting Racism and White Supremacy.* A new Standing Resolution encouraging us to do this, in light of events of the past year, not to mention our ongoing history. A 2/3 vote in favor is required to establish this as a Standing Resolution.

- *AR11 Methodist Ministry on Eugenics, Neurodiversity, and Disabilities.* This was referred to a group in the Legislative Assembly to be rewritten to become a Standing Resolution, with additional changes, including eliminating it as a position on the Annual Conference Staff. See Proposed SR 6 for the proposed change. The proposed Standing Resolution #6 will require a 2/3 vote in favor.

Actions Referred and/or to be Considered at a Special Legislative Assembly Session June 15

- *AR 4 Calculating Unfunded Pension Liabilities.* This proposal offers a formula for determining the amount of pension liability a congregation choosing to disaffiliate from the denomination over its stand regarding LGBTQIA issues would have to pay (along with other items). The formula claims to be a more fair division of the liability than simply using the apportionment grade figure, by basing the pension liability on payments the congregation itself has made into the pension fund.

  The above item was referred to the Conference's Board of Trustees, the Council on Finance and Administration, and the Board of Pensions for action and recommendation.

- *AR 8 and AR 9 Regarding Lay Members of Annual Conference for New Church Starts.* Referred to the Conference Rules Committee and the Conference Secretary for further work, as the Bishop questioned their legality and the Conference Secretary had concerns about certifying such members for Annual Conference participation. Watch for the report back on this.

- *SR 7 Climate Change.* The Legislative Assembly will consider this item, a renewal of an existing Standing Resolution, as it was inadvertently left out of the packet for the original meeting of the Assembly.