

## ¶ 702. CONNECTIONAL COUNCIL

1. The Connectional Council shall be the chief missional and administrative body of the Global Methodist Church, providing leadership at the general church level in between general conferences. In addition to the express authority outlined herein, the Council shall have full legislative authority with respect to all matters expressly delegated to it by the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* or the General Conference as stated in each such delegation. The Council shall be amenable to the General Conference, its actions shall be reported to the General Conference, and its actions must be ratified by the next General Conference for those actions to continue to be valid following the adjournment of each General Conference.

2. The Council shall consist of not more than 24 persons, who shall serve until the adjournment of the next General Conference or until their successors are elected as provided herein. Service on the Council prior to the 2026 General Conference shall not count against any term limitation. Those persons who are elected to the Council prior to the 2026 General Conference shall serve a two-year term or until their successors are appointed or elected. Beginning with the 2026 General Conference, except for bishops elected to the Council, an individual may not serve on the Council for more than a total of twelve years but are elected to the Council for a term not exceeding six years. Service on the Council prior to the 2026 General Conference shall not count against this term limit. All members of the Council serve with voice and vote.

- a. Each connectional commission identified in ¶¶ 709, 710, 711, 712, and 713 shall elect one clergy, who is not a bishop, and one laity, to represent the commission on the Council. Members shall be elected by each commission at the first commission meeting following General Conference and shall serve until their successors are elected or their membership on the commission ceases, whichever comes first. In case of a vacancy, a commission shall elect a replacement member.
- b. The Assembly of Bishops shall elect two bishops to serve as members of the Council. Those elected prior to the 2026 General Conference shall serve a two-year term and shall serve until their successors are elected. Beginning in 2026, those elected shall serve a six-year term or until their successors are elected. In case of a vacancy, the Assembly of Bishop shall elect a replacement.
- c. The General Conference shall elect four clergy and four laity, from persons nominated in accordance with the Plan of Organization and Covenant of Our Life Together adopted by the 2024 convening General Conference and, and beginning with the 2026 General Conference as specified in the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline*. Those elected prior to the 2026 General Conference shall serve a two-year term or until their successors are elected. Beginning in 2026, those elected shall serve a six-year term on the Council or until their successors are elected at the next General Conference. In case of a vacancy, the Council shall elect a replacement.
- d. The Council shall nominate and elect two additional clergy and two additional laity to ensure geographic, racial and ethnic, age, and gender diversity. Those elected prior to the 2026 General Conference shall serve a two-year term or until their successors are elected. Beginning in 2026, those elected shall serve a six-year term on the Council or until their successors are elected at the next General Conference. In the case of a vacancy of a person in this category, the Council shall elect a replacement.
- e. Excluding the bishops, at all times the number of clergy and laity shall remain equal on the Council.
- f. The Council shall elect its own officers from among its members; however, a bishop may not serve as chair or vice-chair of the Council.
- g. The connectional operations officer shall serve as the staff person for the Council, with

- voice but without vote. The connectional operations officer shall preside at any organizing meeting of the Council until a chair is elected. All general church executive directors shall participate in Council meetings with voice, but without vote. Other general church staff shall participate in meetings of the Council at the invitation of the Council, with voice but without vote.
3. The Council shall meet at least twice per year face-to-face (absent exigent circumstances that would require electronic or other forms of meeting) and electronically at other times for the purpose of communication and coordination of ministry among the commissions.
  4. The Council shall have the following specific authority and responsibilities:
    - a. To implement the vision of the Global Methodist Church and steward its mission, ministries and resources as determined by the actions of the General Conference and in collaboration with the Assembly of Bishops.
    - b. To engage in proactive global strategizing, including developing a strategic plan for growth in evangelism, discipleship, and mission, and to implement the priorities established by General Conference.
    - c. To adopt policies and procedures applicable to the general church, its commissions, and its other entities in alignment with the *Book of Doctrines and Discipline* and the priorities set by General Conference.
    - d. To establish the general church budget annually in accordance with the priorities and directions established by the General Conference provided that each annual budget shall not exceed 90% of the average of general church connectional funding received in the prior two years, except that the 2025 budget shall not exceed 90% of the total sum received in general church connectional funding in 2024. In establishing the general church budget, the Connectional Council shall be guided by the following financial values:
      - i. Accountability to ensure that the assets God has entrusted to us are responsibly managed.
      - ii. Transparency to create trust throughout the connection of the Global Methodist Church.
      - iii. Local church centric as the strategic base for optimizing the mission of the Church.
      - iv. Nimble and Lean Structure of Connectional Entities to ensure adaptability to the ministry needs of conferences and local churches.
      - v. Limited and sustainable policies so as not to restrict, but enable ministry to flourish.
    - e. To ensure the dissemination of information and communication among the annual conferences, connectional commissions, and the Assembly of Bishops.
    - f. To coordinate the work of the connectional commissions and the general church staff to ensure that the actions of the General Conference are implemented, and the vision and mission of the Global Methodist Church is advanced.
    - g. To evaluate the work of the connectional commissions and the ministries of the general church in fulfilling the mission and vision of the Global Methodist Church as established by the General Conference.
    - h. In collaboration with the conference superintendents, to adopt and implement services to be performed by the general church which will benefit the annual conferences and produce cost savings based on economies of scale.
    - i. To evaluate and authorize such changes in the pensions and benefits programs of the Global Methodist Church upon recommendation of the Connectional Commission on Finance, Administration, Pensions, and Benefits.
    - j. To hire the connectional operations officer and evaluate his/her work annually (§ 703).

- k. To approve and authorize all staff positions at the general church level.
  - l. To fill vacancies among the members of a connectional commission that occur between General Conferences, upon nomination by the relevant connectional commission.
  - m. To coordinate proposals coming from the connectional commissions to the General Conference, to assure congruence with the church's mission and strategy, as well as congruence with each other.
  - n. To initiate, staff, and set parameters for task forces dealing with issues beyond the scope of an individual connectional commission.
  - o. To recommend to the General Conference such changes and implementing legislation as may be appropriate to ensure the effectiveness of the Global Methodist Church.
5. The Council shall be an incorporated legal entity.