

COMMITTEE ON STANDING RULES

Rev. Jay Voorhees, Chair

Bishop McAlilly, members of the Tennessee Annual Conference, and brothers and sisters in Christ, the Standing Rules of the Tennessee Annual Conference represent “the means by which we organize and oversee our work of making disciples for the transformation of the world.” The Committee on Standing Rules was created by the conference to propose new policies and standing rules, propose needed amendments to existing policies and standing rules, and to provide guidance to the annual conference regarding compliance with those rules.

While there are times when rules can seem legalistic attempts to prescribe behavior, these rules represent our polity as an annual conference, establishing procedures that facilitate our life together, and boundaries that ensure we are good stewards of the ministry to which we’ve been entrusted. They are the things we have learned over the course of many years, that is, our shared experiences as we carry out God’s work of making disciples for the transformation of the world.

Last year, the focus of the Committee on Standing Rules was the ordering of our rules so as to make them clearer and more accessible. The 2017 Annual Conference adopted our proposed changes, and these are the rules we are functioning under during this session of our conference.

This year, the changes we are proposing fall loosely into five areas:

1. Editorial changes that reflect the transition from printed materials to the distribution of conference information electronically;
2. Structural changes to facilitate the proposed changes in our connectional ministries structure;
3. Changes in our process for adopting and amending our Standing Rules which reflect concerns identified at the 2017 session;
4. Changes requested by the Council on Finance and Administration and the Board of Trustees to facilitate their work; and
5. Other changes at the request of our Connectional Ministries staff and the cabinet.

The Committee on Standing Rules met on April 16 to review these changes, and in some special cases conferred electronically to review and adopt the changes being submitted to you today. The committee was careful in their deliberations, and in the course of the conversation identified several occasions in which we discovered rules that were in conflict with one another. We have attempted to address these conflicts and simplify the rules for improved clarity.

It is our sincere hope that these proposed changes will help to better facilitate our life together as an annual conference and that we will continue to move on to perfection in love as we work to bring Christ to a world in need one neighborhood at a time.

May God continue to bless the work of the Tennessee Annual Conference in the coming days and years.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Jay Voorhees
Chair, the Committee on Standing Rules

**Proposed Changes and Amendments to the
Standing Rules of the Tennessee Annual Conference
Submitted by the Committee on Standing Rules
to the 2018 Session of the Tennessee Annual Conference**

The Committee on Standing Rules makes the following motions for additions and changes in the Standing Rules of the Tennessee Annual Conference:

1. We move that the references to printed materials in Rule # 2.4, 3.3b, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4 be removed and changed to the word “included” so as to facilitate alternative means of distribution.
2. We move that conference authorize the conference journal editor and the chairperson of the Committee on Standing Rules to make editorial changes that provide consistency in style as long as they make no changes in the effect of the rule. (For example, changing the “ten” in Rule 2.3 to “10”).
3. We move that Rule 2.6 be edited to remove “,printed,” and add the words “of the first day of annual conference” and strike the words “at registration” so as to read, *“The agenda of the conference shall be that as is corrected and distributed on the first day of annual conference with the understanding that the bishop may adjust the agenda for the good of the order.”*
4. We move that Rule 2.8 be amended to remove the words “given out at registration” so as to read, *“Voting cards shall be the means of identifying who is eligible to vote on all issues requiring a vote.”*
5. We move that Rule 2.10 be replaced with the following language:
All annual conference reports to be included in the journal shall be e-mailed to the journal editor 10 weeks prior to the opening day of annual conference. Any corrections and/or additions received after this date shall, at the discretion of the journal editor, be included in the succeeding journal. Handwritten and typewritten reports shall not be accepted for publication in the journal. All reports should be typed, using Microsoft Word according to the specifications on the conference website. Photos must be submitted as separate JPG files and must include permissions from all persons pictured. Photos submitted will be used as space permits in the journal. Use Tennessee Conference Journal Style Sheet posted on the conference website for guidance on capitalization, punctuation, and so forth to ensure that the journal has a consistent look and flow. Files that contain tables should be submitted in Microsoft Excel format. No PDF or directly scanned images will be accepted.
6. We move that rule 2.11 be amended as follows:
 - a. To add the words “available online with” and strike the words “distributed in” in the second sentence, and
 - b. Strike the words “or included in the conference packet distributed to the members (both clergy and lay) of the annual conference session.”
 - c. The amended rule will read as follows:
Agenda items and reports not requiring action by the annual conference other than a vote to receive said item for publication in the journal, shall be placed on a consent agenda. In order for any item or report to be eligible for placement on the consent agenda, it must have been available online with the pre-conference materials. Any item may be removed from the consent agenda if 10 members of the conference petition for removal.
7. We move to make the following changes in Section 3 related to the election of delegates to the General and jurisdictional conference:
 - a. To add a deadline for declaration to Rule 3.3e to read as follows:
The initial ballot for election to General Conference will have a ballot number assigned only to those who, by declaration or nomination submitted 10 weeks prior to annual conference, have expressed their desire to be considered as a candidate. All subsequent ballots will assign numbers to write-in candidates during the election process.
 - b. To amend Rule 3.4 to conform to the constitutional changes adopted by the 2016 General Conference and ratified by the annual conferences to read as follows:
Reserve delegates: After the jurisdictional conference delegates are elected, two lay and two clergy reserve delegates shall be elected. The delegation’s budget will include funding for one lay and one clergy reserve delegate to attend General and jurisdictional conferences. In the event of a

tie in the election for reserves, the delegation will be providing funding for two lay and two clergy reserves.

8. We move that the following changes to Section 4 be adopted:
 - a. Changing the heading of Section 4 to read “Suspension, Adoption, and Amendment of Standing Rules.”
 - b. Rule 4.2 be stricken and that Rule 4.3 be amended to read as follows:
Any proposal for the adoption of a standing rule, or for the amendment of an existing standing rule, shall be submitted to the Committee on Standing Rules at least 30 days prior to the first day of the annual conference session. The Committee on Standing Rules will present their recommendations to the annual conference and their recommendations may be adopted or amended from the floor by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.
 - c. To add a new rule as follows:
Any additions or amendments to the Standing Rules shall take effect at the conclusion of the annual conference session in which they are adopted.
 - d. To authorize the journal editor and the chair of the Committee on Standing Rules to renumber the rules based on the above changes and make the corresponding changes in Rule 4.1.
9. We move that the words in Rule 7.1 “or the Board of Trustees of the Tennessee Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church” be stricken. This is in keeping with the requirement that all conference property be titled in the name of the Tennessee Conference, United Methodist Church, Inc.
10. We move to amend Rule 8.7 to read as follows:
The Committee on Nominations shall nominate persons to entities as authorized by the annual conference. It shall also nominate the officers of the Connectional Ministries lead team, as well as the conference lay leader, conference secretary, editor of the journal, and conference statistician at the session immediately following General Conference.
11. We move to strike the following provision in Rule 9.1:
Committees or other entities pertaining to the Council on Connectional Ministries that do not meet these inclusiveness guidelines (lay/clergy, gender, and ethnic minority) may be filled until the next annual conference by the conference council upon nomination from the Conference Council Committee on Personnel.
12. We move to amend Rule 9.4 by removing the words “Conference Council on Connectional Ministries” and replace them with the words “Connectional Ministries lead team” to read as follows:
Persons who are elected to membership on the entities of the annual conference who are absent without excuse, for 50 percent or more of the meetings of that entity in a given year, shall be replaced on that entity. Replacement shall be nominated by the Conference Committee on Nominations, or other appropriate nominating source, and elected by the annual conference, except as may be otherwise stipulated in The Book of Discipline. Replacement members of various boards, councils, and committees of the Connectional Ministries lead team shall be affected by the team, according to its procedure.
13. We move to add a new Rule 11.3 (renumbering all the succeeding numbers in that category) to describe a budgeting process as requested by the Council on Finance and Administration. The rule reads as follows:
For conference benevolences as defined in ¶614.3c of the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline, the following process shall be used:
 - a) *All budget requests shall be made through the Connectional Ministries council, who will determine how these requests connect to the missional priorities of the annual conference.*
 - b) *The Connectional Ministries council will present all budget requests to the Council on Finance and Administration for final review, approval, and presentation to the annual conference.*
14. We move to strike Rule 11.11, believing it to be redundant and not necessary based on the provisions of the existing Rule 11.2 and the new rule mentioned in item 12.
15. We move to add a new rule to the end of Section 11 to read as follows:
Whenever church property is transferred to the annual conference through its board of trustees (voluntarily or according to ¶ 2549.3b, Discipline (2016), the annual conference Board of Trustees is authorized to hold, maintain, insure, or dispose of such property on behalf of the conference, subject to any disciplinary

requirements or restrictions. Repayment of debt to the conference or district, including up to five years of unpaid apportionments, shall be a priority claim on the net proceeds of any sale.

16. We move to amend Rule 13.2 by striking the reference to the Conference Council on Connectional Ministries and replacing with the term “Connectional Ministries staff, so as to read:
All first-time pastors, and all persons serving under appointment in the Tennessee Conference shall be required to complete one CEU of the Basic Sexual Ethics Training and one CEU of the Basic Safe Sanctuary Training. All persons serving under appointment in the Tennessee Conference shall be required to take at least one CEU each quadrennium in the subject areas of sexual ethics and safe sanctuary training. This advanced training will be available only to those who have previously completed the basic training. Both sexual ethics and safe sanctuary training shall be included in lay servant and certified lay ministry training programs. Local church ministry staff is encouraged to complete both the sexual ethics and safe sanctuary training. The Office of Ministerial Concerns will be the entity that will maintain the record keeping and verification of those persons under appointment who have completed the sexual ethics and safe sanctuary training. Connectional Ministries staff and the Office of Ministerial Concerns will work in cooperation to offer the sexual ethics and safe sanctuary training seminars.
17. At the request of the cabinet of the Tennessee Annual Conference, we move to amend Section 14 – Parsonage Standards as follows:
 - a. Strike Rule 14.3c from the Section 14 to reflect the realities of current telephone technology.
 - b. Change the references in Rule 14.2e to conform to the *2016 Book of Discipline*.